

M.DCC.XXV.



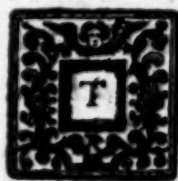
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T H E
P R E F A C E
T O T H E
R E A D E R.



H A T which I here offer to the World, is the Result of my Studies for some Years upon a very grave and serious Subject, which by the Nature of it requires some Application of Mind and serious Thought in the *Reading* as well as the *Writing* of it.

I do not mean to say that I have so long and with so great Deliberation ponder'd every *smaller thing* that is to be found in the whole Book, as particularly the *Remarks upon the Poets* in the End, many of which

were added, and others altered whilst it was in the *Press*, not but that I hope, even those *hastier Thoughts* may *stand*: And possibly they may *entertain the more* for their having less of the *Phlemma* in them. For that Part is in some measure by way of *relieving from intenter Thought*; yet the Argument, tho' in a different manner, is still carry'd on; which is the Reason that there is less of *good Nature* in the *Critique* than might be wish'd for the *Entertainment* of those who are *good-natur'd* and *candid*. I did not want only or morosely *choose* but was, or at least I thought I was, *oblig'd to blame*. I have seen a Manuscript Note of an eminent Person that *a Postscript at the beginning of a Book is Nonsense*, yet it was a great Man too, one of the *first Rank* in the Commonwealth of Learning, that was so remark'd upon; but the Reason of the thing as well as the common Practice will bear me out in making a *Preface in Part a Post-script*, and therefore I shall use the *Tenses indifferently* as they shall best answer my Purpose.

My Design is to treat of *Divine Providence* as it relates to the *Natural* and to the *Moral World distinctly and separately*, for
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the sake of Method and greater Perspicuity; excepting that in the Chapter *Of special Interpositions*, it would be very difficult and I think unnecessary to observe that Method; which Chapter therefore, being *mix'd* and pertaining to *both*, may be a proper *Transition* from one to the other of those distinct Considerations.

I SHALL have a particular Regard (as the *Title* indeed does in part set forth) to the *Symmetry* of *Divine Providence*, or the *Congruity* of GOD's *paternal Government* both to his *own Attributes*, and to the *Natures* of *Beings* that He has created. This is what I have been led to, and shall labor the more to prove and illustrate, for that I have very often observ'd this Subject to be treated with *little or no Regard* to such *Suitableness*, although without a Regard to it the PROVIDENCE OF GOD must be not only *defectively*, but *unworthily* and *untruly* represented.

THE Learned will easily imagine that with this view I may fall in with, and make use of several *Platonic* Notions and Arguments; and I hope I have done so within the Bounds hinted in that known Admonition

tion *Amicus Plato, Amicus Aristoteles, sed magis Amica Veritas.*

INDEED the *Definition* I give of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, in the very Entrance upon the Subject, is not much unlike what Plato had taught, as we are inform'd by *Hierocles*, viz. * That the various kinds of rational Beings, Heavenly, Aerial, and Terrestrial or Human, are all properly rank'd and suitably governed; That GOD being the Maker, and the Father of them all, has of Consequence a Care and the Government over them all; and that this Paternal Governing of them, and distributing Places, Directions, Laws, and all things suitably to them respectively is what is called his PROVIDENCE.

IT is true that PLATO taught not only a Providence but a Fate too; but then he perfectly excludes all Notion of Necessity from what he calls Fate, and he strongly asserts the Freewill of Man (as both *Hierocles* and *Alcinous* attest) when he explains his Notion of Fate, which in short is this: That it is that Part or Adjunct

* De Provid. & Fato p. 90. Edit. Lond.

of GOD'S PROVIDENCE which consists in the righteous executing the Sanctions of his Laws, in recompensing to Men suitably to what they have done, not by Destiny or Necessity, but freely ; since without this Freedom there could be no such thing, says he, as Rewarding or Punishing.

AGREEABLY to this of their Master the * *Platonists* do every where speak of this *Suitableness* and SYMMETRY of GOD'S *Providence*.

THIS is a Sentiment I heartily embrace (together with the School of *Plato*, and together, as I hope, with a very great number of pious *Christians* and *Divines*) because it appears to me to be a *Theology* abundantly more rational, and worthy of GOD than the *contrary* Sentiment is ; and more agreeable to that which it has pleased GOD to make known to us of Himself by *Revelation*.

* *Πρόνοια ὅτι Θεὸς ἐκάλεσε γένε τα πρεσβήματα διανέμει.*

Σύμμηλος γὰρ ταῖς ὑσίοις τῶν ὅλων καὶ ὁ τῆς προνοίας Δισμύς,
says *Hierocles*, and rational Beings are represented as fitted together in Chorus and Symphony by the Supreme Governor—*ἐν χορῶ καὶ συμφωνίᾳ συνηρῆσθαι ἀλλήλοις.*

T H O'

THO' I am sensible that it is the latter, viz. a *Divine Revelation*, and the Arguments thence suggested, that a *Christian* is to lay the *principal* Stress upon, for the *proper* and *direct* Proof of such deep and important Points of *Theology* as I am here engaging in, yet I shall make no scruple of taking from the *Platonists*, or the Writings of any *other Foreigners* to our Religion, such Arguments and Observations as are proper in *some degree to prove*, or sometimes it may be only to *illustrate* the things I treat of.

IF this be *Platonizing* (a Charge that in reference to some *other* Points will lie harder I doubt upon some of the *antient Fathers*) I must be content; and indeed am far from thinking it a Disgrace to be esteemed *so far a PLATONIST*. I only would observe that it is suspected by a very learned † Person, that the Heathen Author I make the greatest Use of (unless perhaps I am to except *Tully*) that *Hierocles* I say, as well as some other of the *later Platonists* mended in several things

† Dr. WHITEY.

their old Philosophy, by an artful Mixture and Interfersion of fuch Doctrines as they found and approv'd amongst the *Christians*, and that it will fufficiently appear by the Sequel, that I do not *implicitly* follow *Plato*, nor have embrac'd *all* his Notions concerning a *Divine Providence*.

SOME it may be will be apt to fay, what have we to do with the Opinions or Arguments of *any Pagan* at all? Cannot we establish a *DIVINE PROVIDENCE* directly by the *HOLY SCRIPTURE*, without any other help? We certainly may do fo, and in a very little Compafs, by producing one or two *plain* and *positive Texts*; but wife Men and very good *Christians* never thought it neceffary to *lay aside all other Books* out of refpect to the *sacred Pages*. It would have been a very unhappy thing if *Christian Divines* had generally argu'd after the fame manner that *AQUINAS* did, and if they had profecuted their Studies conformably to fuch Opinion.

CERTAINLY it was with more *Zeal* than *Judgment* that he undertook the Task of inventing Solutions to all the Arguments he could think of to prove the World

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could

could not have been *Eternal*, for fear that otherwise the Testimony and Authority of the *Scriptures* would not have their due Weight, or have a sufficient Regard paid to them,

IF this be good arguing in relation to the Question of the *World's Eternity*, it is good also directly in the Question concerning a DIVINE PROVIDENCE, besides that there is a Presumption (as I shall shew) in Favor of the *latter* from the right and true Determination of the *former*.

THE Divine Revelation of the GOSPEL has brought *Life* and *Immortality*, the Doctrines of a *future State* of *Retribution* into a much clearer and more perfect Light, than before they could be seen in; but we are not therefore to make it a Point of Conscience, not to make use of any such Light and Evidence as did occur to Men who were without the Benefit of this Dispensation. *Valeat quantum valere potest*, is as applicable here as in any *Law-Case*, or any other that can be imagin'd.

IF indeed we should lay a greater Stress upon such Arguments than they will fairly bear, if we shall call those *demonstrative*
Argu-

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Arguments which are only *probable* ones we shall be to blame.

IN short the Objection, I have here been obviating, is built upon such a *Scrupulousness* as is far from being of any real Service to Religion; so far from it, that the *Christian World* would have *very much Dis-service* done it, if learned Men had commonly gone into such Notions, and acted suitably to them. *Christians* would thus *voluntarily* have depriv'd themselves of all the Advantages of *foreign* Books and Learning; the *very thing* which their greatest and subt'lest * Adversary once labor'd with united Force and Cunning to have effected!

THERE are some things indeed so *properly* and *wholly* *Points of Faith*, that they are no otherwise to be prov'd, nor any other Light to be had in them, than from *Scripture*. But as to *other* Matters which are to be discuss'd in part by, and have an evident Foundation in *natural* Reason, here we are to get the best Helps (as well as to preserve our Minds in the best Order) we can to judge of them. And why may we not do so without uncharitable censuring

* JULIAN.
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others

others if they should, especially in some of the more *minute* or more *abstruse* Points, differ in their way of Thinking from us?

WHERE there are *some Difficulties on either side*, in that Case the proper Enquiry is, which are greater *upon the Balance*? And as none appear to me so great on the side of *asserting Man's Freedom*, as those which affect the opposite Scheme, I see not what else I can do but (amidst *Reading* and *Studying* join'd with *Prayer* to GOD the *Father of Light* to illuminate my Darkness) to interpret obscure Passages by clearer, and to understand some particular objected Texts of Scripture, that seem in their most obvious import to clash with and destroy Man's Liberty, in a *qualify'd and less obvious Sense*, that is consistent with its clearer Parts and general Purport, as well as with the common Sense and Reason that GOD has given us. Nor will I suffer my self to fear that I can incur his Displeasure, whilst I conduct my self in this manner, according to that Measure of Light which it has pleas'd Him to afford me.

As to the Account I give of the *Lying Spirit*, spoken of in the 18th Chap. of 2
Chron.

Chron. suppos'd by many really to have been sent by GOD to *deceive Ahab*, &c. I imagine it may be objected against what I have argu'd upon that Subject, that it is said by *Micajah* in the *Preface* to this Representation at v. 18. *Again he said, therefore hear the Word of the Lord.* But I refer this to the *substantial* Part of what he was going to say, confirmatory of what he had before declar'd, viz. *The Lord hath spoken Evil against thee.* I interpret it to be only a reminding them in general, that he had certainly had a Revelation in the Matter, which the two Kings were so solicitous, and made this great Enquiry about. If any shall say that I interpret loosely, I will ask them how they can interpret, without a *Laxity*, the Conduct and these Words of the Prophet to *Ahab* at the first, when he makes answer to the King (asking him, *Shall we go to Ramoth-Gilead to Battle, or shall I forbear?*) as we read at v. 14. *Go ye up and prosper, and they shall be delivered into your Hand.* It is plain they must allow of some Liberty and Latitude in explaining things here, as they do in many other places. Every Man uses this way of interpreting Scripture, and

and yet many are apt to call it *Wresting of the Scriptures*, and other hard Names, when the same Method is taken in Cases, where they indeed *do not* apprehend it necessary, but *others* did, who might have had *equal Piety, equal Veneration* for the *Scripture* with themselves.

IF my Readers may see Reason to *differ* from me, and think me mistaken in any Point, whether more professedly or only incidentally treated ; let not *their Zeal* prompt them to a *great Indignation* against a Man that cannot think *exactly in every Point* as they do, rather let the *Charity* of *other Christians* believe or hope, what I have the Pleasure to believe *of my self*, viz. that I would not *knowingly* defend or embrace ERRORS, and also that I have taken such Methods as were in my Power to find out TRUTH.

PERHAPS it may be thought by some that such a *Liberty* as I have taken in several Places both of thinking and speaking my Thoughts, might be well enough indulg'd to a *private* or *lay Person*, but that it does not so well become one of the *Clergy*, bound as we are with *so many Cords* to an *Uniformity of Opinions*, which yet Multitudes

titudes of Men can never think perfectly alike in, neither can have an *equal* Idea of the *Importance* of some of them, if they should be in perfect Agreement as to the *Truth* and *Certainty* of them, or the *Clearness* wherewith they may be express'd.

I ACKNOWLEDGE that I am a *Free-Thinker*, and should esteem it no Injury *barely* to be call'd such. But common *Equity*, and common *Sense* indeed, will not suffer any who shall read this Book with the least Attention, to rank me with those Men, who would willingly *appropriate* to themselves that *Name*, though they have been prov'd to have follow'd their Leaders with as much *Tameness* and *Stupidity* as they can object to *very implicit Believers*, and to be obstinately attach'd to the *most slavish Sett of Principles of any Men in the World*.

I SHALL always be ready I hope in the first place to hearken to Reason, and to *depart* from any Notions I have advanc'd, whenever it shall be made appear to me, that they are of *ill consequence and weakly founded*; and again I make this public Declaration, that if I adhere to them (as without Conviction it is but an honest
part

part to do) and if the *Most Reverend* the PRELATE, to whose Jurisdiction I am subject, shall conceive that I do in some Points *Pelagianize*, or whatever else it be call'd, more than can safely be allow'd a *Person benefic'd in the Church, and having Cure of Souls* to do, I shall make way for the *Effects of Authority*, which are of an *odious Nature* in a *manner least invidious or troublesome*, consistent I hope with a *good Conscience*, and attended with *Decency* on *my part*, and I hope also not with too great Severity of Reflection on *any other*. For *that* is the Severity I am most afraid of; and nothing is nearer to a Man after a good Conscience and good Hope towards God, than the preserving if it be possible a *fair Character*, which if I cannot do, I will pray to GOD, that I may go *thro' good Report and ill Report with a firm and Christian Mind*.

I DO not indeed speak in this manner with a *single View* to the POSSIBILITY of *my Superiors* esteeming me less capable of doing Good, or thinking me likely to do hurt in my *present Station*, upon the Account of any thing I here advance in this
Book.

Book. For I must own that I have long and passionately *sigh'd after a Discharge*, such as might not fix any *Reproach* or *Dis-honour* on me, from a *Function and Office* for which I look upon my self for other *Reasons* utterly unfit. Besides this Concern I say above hinted (which I will not dissemble, though that also may be an *Effect of my Weakness*) at being ty'd so *straitly* to a *precise Point*, and *Uniformity of Opinion* with others in Matters where I think some *Latitude* might be indulg'd, I am strongly mov'd by the *Sense of my Infirmities*, which are neither easy to be describ'd, nor worth describing, and an *insuperable ever-increasing Pain and Disorders in officiating in any Public Solemnities* from thence arising. A great Part of the World I know will look upon that as an *Imaginary Disorder*, which I feel so *real* as to be destroying, together with my *Capacity for public Ministrations*, my *Health* (if that can be call'd *Health* which is subject to it) and the *Comfort of Life*, and which will absolutely do it without an *Effort* to save *some*, when I can save *no more than some* of them. Nor am I altogether

gether my own Witness in this melancholy Case; too often has it appear'd both to Strangers and to those with whom I have been some Years in *Weakness, and in Fear, and in much Trembling*. And therefore I hope and persuade my self that *they* will not take the Desire, I here so publicly express, of making my self *more easy* (but *not idle*) as any Argument of my *Want of Affection towards them*.

WHAT Speculations the World may make upon this *Openness* I cannot tell; every one I suppose agreeably to his Principles and Temper; and the *uncharitable part of Mankind* will hardly be prevented from making *Reflections* that are *uncharitable*. It may be therefore but of little Effect to tell those before-hand who shall ascribe perchance this Conduct of mine to a *Spleen* and *Chagrine* conceiv'd upon *Disappointment* in *Church-Preferments*, or to a *Confidence* in present or expected *Affluence of Temporals*, that they must have had a further Insight into my *Circumstances* both *external* and *internal*, than *I have had myself*, to found such a Conceit upon. As a Man may himself indeed have a more assured Knowledge of his *outward*

ward Situation than he can in many cases of what passes *within him*, when there may be a Mixture of Principles, I will speak *modestly*, and content my self with only saying, as to an *ill Humour from suppos'd Neglects* (the other being out of the case) that I believe my self pretty free from *such Byasses*. And this I persuade my self of not merely from what has pass'd *within me*, but also in part from *Facts and Circumstances* which I believe will *now* be recollected by *several of my Friends*, who have thought my Conduct strange and unaccountable. Receive they here again my *Thanks* for their *Good-will and kind Intentions* towards me! and may I presume to hope for the *Continuance of their Affection to me*, whilst they will find it proper to spare themselves the Labor of any further Endeavors to promote me to the *good Benefices* or the *Preferments* of any sort they may have had in view for me!

I AM far from *glorying* in a *Mutability* and *Inconstancy of Opinions*, a thing that I am very sensible does demonstrate Weakness. But if a Man has alter'd his Opinion in some Points, so that he could not *renew his Subscriptions*, where he formerly thought

it not unreasonable to *subscribe*, and to profess *so exact and precise* an Assent to a great Number of Propositions; I look upon it to be most agreeable to Reason, and least dishonourable for him, to intimate such a Change upon a *proper* Occasion with *Modesty* and *Decency*; whilst he should rest himself content to bear *so much Shame as such Weakness may justly entitle him to*, without a great deal of Surprize or Emotion, if he should find many believe a *greater Proportion* of it due to him than he *does himself*.

I HAVE endeavor'd to keep the *Medium* betwixt two *dangerous Excesses* that are sometimes incident to Persons who think much on this Subject. *One* is (and I believe it is much the commonest) that of making Men in effect *Machines*, and not *Free* and *Real Agents*; which is by no means an innocent and harmless Opinion, tho' I am very sensible it arises out of a Respect for Religion, but ill conducted, and a Fear of *any Approaches* towards *Impiety*. The *other Danger* is that of Verging towards the *Epicurean* Scheme or that of *Democritus, Diagoras*, or others who have gone very far towards

wards elevating a *Divine Superintendence*,
or perhaps have *plainly and totally deny'd*
it.

I AM none of those whom Dr. South
somewhere calls *Quacks* and *Mountebanks*
in Divinity, who can *perfectly* solve every
Objection and Difficulty that can be pro-
pos'd to them. No. I'm more *experient'd* in
and conscious of the *Imperfections* that at-
tend Humanity in this present State. Happy
they that have got beyond this Veil!
above the Cloud and Darkness of this World,
and have attain'd the Light of a *more per-
fect and exalted State!* I know, nor am I
asham'd to own the Uneasiness and Regret
of *impotent Thoughts*, the Pain of *fruitless*
Attempts to solve yet more clearly an
Objection some or other that presents it
self, and to pursue to purpose a *Flying*
Truth in the *Confines of Light and Dark-
ness.*

BUT why art Thou so disquieted O my
Soul? Let *Faith* present the blissful Regi-
ons where every thing that was *imperfect*
is made perfect, or is done away, where
painful Studies and Enquiries after Truth
once beset with perplexing Difficulties, is
chang'd

chang'd into full and clear Knowledge, and Faith itself swallow'd up therein, as Hope is in Fruition.

REST then the busy the tir'd Mind, reliev'd with the pleasing Prospect of those *Mansions of Rest and Light*, where purer and happier Souls can with Ease discover and admire, together with the *Holy Angels*, infinite *Beauty and Harmony*, in those Parts of the *Divine Oeconomy*, which to us are most obscure, and may seem *harsh and discordant*.

SOME may think it strange perhaps that I should presume to *publish* these Thoughts, and to *write* upon a Subject in which I own I cannot clearly solve all *Difficulties* that may occur.

BUT must we not therefore contemplate such important Subjects because of their *Difficulty*? Must we (as some in Effect have argu'd) content our selves with Schemes that are open to *innumerable*, and most *shocking* Objections, as soon as or rather than with *those*, which are liable to much *fewer* and *less* considerable ones, because the former have with much Positiveness been *averr'd* for true, and insisted on as
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the most *important* and *principal* Truths of our Religion by Men of great *Note* and *Figure*?

LET such *great Men* have their *due* Praise; but let them not be thought *infallible*: They may have a *just Title* to our Esteem for their Learning, Pains, and Piety; but not to make us receive their *Dogmata*, as the *Pythagorean* were receiv'd of old, and the *Roman* now, without *Examination*.

CERTAINLY it becomes not Men who do not think that *Ignorance is the Parent of Devotion*, but who profess a desire of *knowing* GOD, and therefore would count it the most unhappy *Stupidity* to be insensible of the *Wisdom* and *Goodness* of his *Operations*; it can never become such to argue, that because there will be still *some Difficulties* in such Matters as we are speaking of, therefore it is of little or no Importance, whether they be *greater* or *less*, *more* or *fewer*.

FOR my own Part, if by my Studies I have gain'd *any clearer Conceptions* of these things, though short of what I have aspir'd after, let GOD be praised, that my Pains have

have so far been blest'd! But still more happy shall I be, if this Labor of mine may contribute, though it were but in a small Degree, to cast *some Light* upon the *dark Shades* of this Subject, as well as give Occasion (for this I may hope without any great Presumption) for *Piety* and *Gratitude* towards GOD by bringing to the *Reader's* Mind such *plain Marks* of his FAVOR and GOOD-WILL towards Mankind, as all the *rational* Part of the World cannot but know, and be fully persuaded of.

Farewel.

*Written at Darrington near Pontefract on
the Feast of All-Saints, Nov. 1. 1724.
and Revis'd at London, April 14. 1725.*

The Reader is desir'd to correct these ERRATA.

ESSAY, Page 75. in the Note, Line 14. for *inertia*. read *inertia*. p. 113. after *Abhorrence of Vice*. add *accompany'd with some lively Motion and Vehemence*. p. 129. l. 11. for *quotidianam*. r. *quotidiana*.

Appendix, Page 80. Line 28. for *Oedipus*. read *Phoenissa*. If some other Faults may have escap'd, 'tis hop'd they are not of much Importance.

ΣΤΝ ΘΕΩ!



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A N

E S S A Y

U P O N

Divine Providence.

The INTRODUCTION.

*The Definition of Divine Providence, with a
larger Explication and Description of it,
and Plan of the whole Essay.*



DIVINE PROVIDENCE
is the Paternal Government and Care
of GOD over the Universe, which He
exercises *suitably* to his own Attributes,
and to the Natures of Things and Beings He has
created.

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BUT as it is a very *complex Notion* that is imply'd in the Word *Providence*, and as sometimes more and sometimes fewer Ideas have been convey'd by it, it may be necessary to express more fully and distinctly what I intend and have thus compriz'd in this short Definition, before I set about the Proof of it; and tho' I have given a *general* Definition of DIVINE PROVIDENCE, yet I propose to treat of it (except it may be in a Word or two incidentally) in no greater Extent than as it is conversant about *Men*, and Things wherewith they can be affected.

GOD has then, I say, provided for *Men* with a kind and PATERNAL Care in the Administration of the NATURAL or MATERIAL World; so that all Events, whether arriving according to the ORDINARY COURSE of Nature, or by SPECIAL INTERPOSITIONS, are wonderfully ADAPTED to the regular and reasonable Desires of Men.

THUS there is such an *Adaptation* and *Agreement* of Things with one another, that the common Necessities of Mankind are graciously provided for, and supply'd in the *usual Course* of things proceeding according to *general* Laws of Nature with infinite Goodness and Wisdom originally establish'd.

BUT whatever God's GENERAL PROVISIONS are, either as to *outward* Dispensations, or in regard to Mens *Minds* and their most *important Interests*, they do by no means preclude his *special* INTERVENTIONS. He has in his Wisdom *reserv'd* to Himself such power of INTERPOSING; He has often exerted, and does still *exert and shew Himself* in such manner.

DIVINE PROVIDENCE. 3

HE has done so by working many MIRACLES in old time, and by many certain PREDICTIONS of *future Events*, which were not possible to be foreseen by any Circumstances of things by *Men*, or by *Natural Causes at all*, which oftentimes they had no dependance on, or Connexion with.

AND besides direct Miracles GOD has remarkably exerted and shewn himself by SIGNAL SPECIAL DISPENSATIONS, as He still does when he sees meet, in prospering or punishing *whole Societies* of Men; in vouchsafing *extraordinary Escapes, Supports, or Successes* to *particular good Men*; and in terrible *Judgments*, such as point out in a surprizing manner the Crimes that brought them down upon the Heads of some notorious and very hardned Sinners, whose Crimes, either in themselves or by some of their Circumstances, have been peculiarly provocative of such manifest and present Vengeance.

IN relation to the MORAL World GOD has in his *Fatherly Care* and Goodness assign'd and appointed THINGS CONVENIENT to all his rational Creatures; so that by the due Performance of their respective Duties, the Good of *each* Creature in particular, and of all in general, is consulted, as well as the *Great Master's Glory*.

HE has given Men an excellent *Rule* of acting, and of conducting themselves, so as to acquire a *Resemblance* of *Himself*, and a share of his *Favour* proportionate thereto.

GOD has given Men a LAW holy, just, and good, with proper SANCTIONS; with proper great and weighty *Motives*, and ASSISTANCES *external* and

internal, that they may not only *know* his Will, but also be *able* to *obey* it.

WHETHER GOD does animadvert on Mens criminal Behaviour in this World, or lets them pass without such present and visible Judgments; He ever *takes most exact and accurate Notice* of Mens Actions and Conduct, whether or no they correspond to the *Precepts* which he has given them. Nor ought it to be doubted but that He will put the *Sanctions* of his just Laws in *Effect* and *Execution*, when *He* shall call Men to an account, and dispense Rewards and Punishments, according to what they have deserved, in the OTHER LIFE, which is properly the STATE OF RECOMPENCE.

I PROPOSE to shew that GOD is a RIGHTE-
OUS JUDGE, though He does not adequately recompence to men in *this Life* according to their Deservings; that it is in the PROVIDENCE of his GOODNESS that He has given Men a LAW, that his *Procedure* with them upon it cannot be, and is not built upon a *cruel Rigour*; but that his JUSTICE as *every other* of his ATTRIBUTES, is AMIABLE and LOVELY; an inexhaustible Fund of *Comfort* and *Pleasure*, when they who meditate on it are *sincere* in their *Obedience* to the *Divine Law*!

IS JUSTICE *amiable* in *Men*, and not so, not infinitely more so, in the DEITY? is it *lovely* in the *Stream* or *Drops* that are *deriv'd*, and not so in the FOUNTAIN it self?

THE *Solemnity* and *Greatness* of my Subject not only disdains to *flatter*, but as a *noble Matron* preserves her self not only *virtuous*, but even at a distance from
Suspicion,

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Suspicion, so it becomes my Subject rather to leave undisplay'd the most affecting Force of an *obvious* and *real* Argument, for what I am here, and in many other Places urging, than by pointing at a *particular Person* to give the opportunity of any one's suspecting me to have said *just things* (and such as no Man could have disallow'd) with a *mean* and *selfish View*.

BUT *thus far* I cannot excuse my self from *urging my Argument*, that if we can see Persons (and the more the better) who amidst all the *solemn Pomp* of a TRIBUNAL, and the TERRORS, the *Law* has arm'd them with to *discourage* Wickedness, and strike an awe into *Evil Doers*, both *meriting* and *enjoying* a general *Respect* and *Love*, then much rather, and more naturally may we conceive the JUSTICE of the SUPREME BEING to be both ADORABLE and LOVELY. For the *Beauty* of that JUSTICE which is of *greatest Eminence*, which we *most* admire and love in any of our *Fellow-Creatures*, the greatest and the best of them, is but a *faint Shadow* of the DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS, which if we be obedient to the *Divine Laws*, we shall behold display'd to us in the great Day of Judgment in all its Lustre. This I think is no Digression. The treating of the RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD will not lead us out of the Subject or Method propos'd. For as GOD'S PROVIDENCE does imply RIGHTEOUSNESS or JUSTICE as an *essential part*, or at least an *inseparable concomitant* of it, so it is plain that RIGHTEOUSNESS includes the Idea of SYMMETRY or SUITABLENESS, nor can there be any *Notion of Justice* as *separate* from, and *regardless* of PROPORTION.

WE

WE may be sure that if GOD *maketh a Weight for the Winds, and weigheth the Waters by Measure*, if He does thus *adapt* every thing in the *natural* World, and does as *Solomon's* Expression is, according to the *Septuagint* Version, *set the one in Symphony with the other*, then no manner of doubt but this *SUITABLENESS* and *PROPORTION* is apparent also in reference to the *MORAL* World and God's *Procedure* with his *rational Creatures*: and it must be very *delightful* as well as *useful* to his *rational Creatures* to contemplate this *SYMMETRY* of the *DIVINE OECONOMY* in *both* these *Respects*; and therefore I propose to speak of them both in their *Order*.

THIS is what I understand by *DIVINE PROVIDENCE*; The reason why I do not with some *include more Ideas*, will be given before I leave the *Subject*, and the more amply, because there will be a necessity of treating it in a *Polemical* or *Controversial Manner*, and that which must be so made out by *Controversy*, if it can be establish'd, is indeed immediately and directly pertinent to my main *Design*. However that it may not interrupt and distaste such *Readers* as are either not qualify'd or not dispos'd to enter so deeply into these *Points*, I shall cast what I have to say of this sort together into an *Appendix*.

IN the mean time the *Pertinency* of all that I *have touch'd* upon to the *Subject* will, I think, hardly be disputed, if there be no *Objection* against the *manner* of illustrating them.

CUSTOM I presume and long Use has affix'd these *Ideas* as *commonly* and *generally* as any to the *Word* I have

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have for my Theme; and rightly, because they are built upon a Foundation of REASON, and may be certainly prov'd by Testimonies of HOLY SCRIPTURE.

MY Purpose and Intention is to make out *both* these Proofs; and I have already said something in the *Preface*, from whence it may appear, that the *former sort* may be at some, as well as the *latter* at other times, *more copiously* treated without any *Impropriety* or *ill Consequences*.



CHAP.



CHAP. I.

*Of the General Providence of GOD in
relation to Outward Things and the Na-
tural World.*



FIRST of all we may premise this, which may help to strengthen, if there were need of it, every succeeding Argument,—That it is a natural Presumption, and a Thought obvious from the Reason of the thing, that GOD ~~should~~ GOVERN the World, because He MADE it.

THAT the World was *uncreated* and *eternal*, was believ'd indeed by several of the *Philosophers*; but others of them asserted, and gave very good Reasons for their Opinion, that it was made by an *intelligent*, even the *Supreme Being*.

HIEROCLES gives us the Sentiment of PLATO, upon this Head, in his Book concerning *Providence* and *Fate*.

PLATO's Doctrine is (says he) That GOD is the *Maker* of the whole World both *visible* and *invisible*; that He made it out of *nothing*; that His Will is sufficient for the *Production* of all things without any *pre-existing Matter*; — From which he proceeds directly

directly to speak of GOD's *Providence* after the manner that I have already mentioned in the Preface. But some (says he) even of those that would be accounted Disciples of *Plato*, do not preserve right Notions of GOD *the Creator of the World*; they erroneously conceive, that GOD did make use of ungenerated pre-existing Matter; that He did not produce it into Being, but only form'd it into a regular and beautiful Order. To which he objects, That this could not be, for that if Matter had been Uncreated and Eternal, then GOD could not have had a just Right to put that which was Co-eternal with Himself out of the Mode of Being it had from Eternity, and had a Right to abide in. And if this were the Case, Beauty and Order would be not only *adventitious* or *foreign* to Matter, but it would be altogether *unnatural* and *forc'd*. I do not mention this as the strongest Argument that may be given in Point of Reason for the *Creation of the World* by GOD, but rather as an *uncommon* one in part, and as to the manner of its Dress, though the *Absurdities* that necessarily follow, upon Supposal of Matter being Co-eternal with GOD, are a common and an invincible Argument against that Tenet.

WHETHER it were principally these Sort of Reasonings, or Inferences made from observing the *late* Invention of several Arts, the *late* Peopling of Countries, so that the *Origin* as well as *Gradual Advances* of both are known (a Thing not to be imagin'd if the World had been Eternal) or whatever other Reasons they might have proceeded upon, the *more probable Philosophers*, as *Aquinas* calls them, did hold, that the World

had a *Beginning* and was *made by GOD*; I find that both he and other Learned Men, as particularly Dr. *Heylin*, do represent even *Aristotle* Himself as arguing for the *Eternity of the World* only by Way of Disputation, and it is a more general and strong Assertion upon this Head, which is added by the latter in his *Theologia Veterum*.

“ To this Truth, says he, that the World had a *Beginning*, and was not of *Eternal Being*, or *Self-existency*, “ most of the old *Philosophers* did consent unanimously, guided thereto by this Impossibility in Nature, “ that any visible Work either natural or artificial, “ should either give it self a Being, or have that “ Being which it hath from no Cause preceding.”

BUT we for our Parts, have, besides many good Arguments from Reason, a *sure Word* informing us, that, *In the Beginning GOD created the Heavens and the Earth*; — *That GOD created Man in his own Image*; — *That He made Heaven and Earth, the Sea, and all that therein is*; — *That in the Beginning was the Word*; — *That all Things were made by Him*; — *That He that built all Things is GOD*.

“ Now the *same* Ends, Designs and Motives, “ whatever they were, that induc'd GOD to make “ the World at first, will always be Motives, so long “ as it shall last, that he take care of it and look after “ it when made.” And this Argument in Conjunction with the *Proofs of the Fact*, that there is an *actual Providence and Government* of GOD over the World, will be a full Evidence sufficient to satisfy all serious and rational Men.

WHOEVER

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WHOEVER should deny this important Truth, *that the World was made by GOD*, does at the same time cast away a very great Motive for his believing a *Divine Providence*; though I do not assert it is utterly impossible for a Man in some sort and degree to believe *GOD's Providence*, and yet to deny or doubt of his having *made the World*.

EPICURUS and his Followers asserted that *the World* became what it is *by Chance*, and that Man was form'd also by an *accidental Mixture of the Elements*; they were not likely to have upon this setting out (and it is certain in Fact they had not) such Notions of *GOD's Providence* and his governing the World as they ought to have had; and yet after all that we find said of them, I think there may be room to question whether or no they were such *constant, thorow-pac'd Deniers of a Divine Providence*, as it is commonly suppos'd they were.

IT is confess'd by their Enemies and Opposers that they were wont to bear their Part in *Religious Rites*, and *Divine Worship*, and that EPICURUS himself wrote a Book concerning RELIGION, *and the manner in which Men should conduct themselves in relation to the Deity*.

WE must therefore either say that they talk'd of and practis'd *Religion* insincerely, and merely to avoid the Inconveniencies that might arise from a popular Odium; or that the Evidences of a *DIVINE PROVIDENCE* did strike upon them with so much *force*, that they could not *uniformly and totally* reject it.

THE *first* of these is what indeed is commonly said concerning them. But as I am not oblig'd to suppose all Mankind, and particularly EPICURUS *and his Herd*,

consistent with themselves in *all* Points, or always so in *Points of very great Importance*, I can as easily persuade my self of the latter, and that they discours'd and argu'd loosely and weakly about DIVINE PROVIDENCE, incongruously to the Thoughts they had whilst they talk'd of or practis'd any Thing of *Religion*.

IT is commonly said that there are not many, if indeed any, *Speculative Atheists*, and for much the same Reasons as it is so judg'd, I may have leave to question, whether there have been *many* amongst the *Epicureans* themselves, if perhaps any at all, who were *total, constant and uniform Rejecters of a Divine Providence*.

AND this Observation may help to confirm an Assertion, and to anticipate an Objection that might be made to a Passage I am going to cite from a *judicious and excellent Author*, for such is *Archbishop SHARP*, universally and deservedly esteem'd, who says thus:
 " It is the Voice of all Mankind, that there is a *Divine*
 " *Providence*; for otherwise how comes it to pass,
 " that among *all Nations*, and in *all Ages*, there has
 " been *some Religion or other* practis'd? I pray what is
 " the Meaning of *worshipping GOD*; of putting up
 " *Prayers and Supplications* to Him for the Things we
 " need; of returning *Thanks* for the Benefits we have
 " receiv'd; of appointing *Religious Rites and Methods*
 " for the *Expiation of Guilt*, or the *averting of impen-*
 " *dent Calamities*; all which Things have been practis'd
 " in all Nations from the Beginning of the World to
 " this Day; I say, what is the Meaning of all this,
 " unless it was hereby meant to be signify'd that there
 " is a *GOD* which doth concern himself in the Af-
 " fairs

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“fairs of Mankind, and who doth dispense Good or
“Evil to them, as they well or ill behave themselves
“towards him?

BUT let us now enter upon some Arguments in
Proof that there *actually and evidently is a Divine Pro-
vidence.*

OBSERVE we *ist*, therefore, That there is a mani-
fest *general* Ordination and Adaptation of Things in
the *Natural World*, so as that they both suit to one
another, and to the Use and Service of Men.

THUS the common Necessities of Mankind are
graciously provided for and supply'd in the *usual Course*
of Things proceeding according to *general Laws of Na-
ture*, with infinite Goodness and Wisdom *originally*
establish'd.

MANIFOLD are the Works of GOD, and in Wis-
dom hath He made them all.

THE HEAVENS declare the *Glory of GOD*, and are
an evident Demonstration of PROVIDENCE in *this*
Branch of it.

THE *Heavenly Bodies* are constituted with most ex-
act *Proportion* to one another in all their Positions and
prodigious Circuits.

THE Truth of this has been generally acknowledg'd
(and with a proportionable Encrease of Admiration)
by those who have penetrated the *farthest* into Enqui-
ries and Studies of this Kind; and that *Prince* and
Astronomer who is said to have found fault with some
of the *Heavenly Bodies*, or their Motions, as not con-
stituted so well and wisely as he could have contriv'd
them, is known by the Learned in that Way, to have
founded

founded that his *impious* Reflection entirely upon his own *Ignorance* and *Mistakes*.

BUT others, (whom I have already mention'd, and am here professedly opposing) have admitted this just *Proportion* and beautiful *Symmetry* in the *Heavenly Bodies*, and all their *Motions*, and have pretended to account for it by a fortuitous *Concourse of Atoms*, and mere *Chance*, without a *Divine Intervention*, without any *intelligent Mind* and *Counsel*.

YET no Man is so absurd as to ascribe the Production of an accurate and admirable *Book* rather to the *fortuitous* Arrangement and Combination of the Letters by *Chance* into that Order, than to the *Contrivance*, Thought, and Performance of an *intelligent Being*. Neither were any of the *Epicureans* ever so absurd as to imagine the *Spheres*, which the skilful Astronomers and Artists of *Rome* had made, were the Products of a *casual Combination* of the several Parts into that Order which they beheld.

IF such a *Sphere* (as was lately made here in *England* by an experter *Possidonius*) which describ'd the various *Motions* of the *Heavenly Bodies* with admirable Art and Accuracy; if such a *Sphere* easily and plainly prov'd itself to be a *Work of Thought*; that *Wisdom* and *Reason* and not *Chance* had been concern'd in the making of it; certainly then those *Bodies* and their *Motions*, which were here but imitated, must appear to be so too to all that are not blinded by the strongest *Prejudices*, or resolute to adhere to the *Epicurean Scheme* even with their Eyes open to its many gross *Absurdities*.

FOR

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FOR as these *Original*, viz. the *Heavenly Bodies* themselves are contriv'd and order'd with *infinitely* greater Perfection than the best of human Art can imitate and represent them, they are manifest Arguments to us of *infinite* Wisdom, Indications of a * *Divine Workmanship* and *Providence*.

AND again is it rational, or has it the least *Appearance* of Reason, to ascribe to a *blind Chance* not only so admirable a *Proportion* and *Beauty* in these Things themselves, but also their most evident and manifold Usefulness to Mankind?

The *kindly Effects* and *Influences* of the *Heavenly Bodies* in regard to us, are by far too numerous to particularize.

WHEN CICERO had specify'd some of them as the † *variety* of wholesome and pleasant Things which are produc'd for our Use at different Seasons of the Year, and had observ'd that the *Vicissitude* of *Day* and *Night* supports and conserves the Animal World, proportioning them a time to *rest*, as well as a time to

* *De Nat. Deor.* p. 194. Quis hunc hominem dixerit qui cum tam certos cœli motus, tam ratos astrorum Ordines, tamque inter se omnia connexa & apta viderit, ea casu fieri dicat, quæ quanto consilio gerantur nullo consilio assequi possumus?

Ibid. p. 216. Quæ copulatio rerum, & quasi consentiens ad Mundi incolumitatem coagmentatio Naturæ, quem non movet, hunc horum nihil reputavisse certo scio.

† Upon this Occasion our Author puts into Balbus's Mouth this odd Paradox by a sort of Redundancy, as I take it, and a bold Stroke of his Wit, that Providence it self by its so ample Supply for Men's Convenience and Pleasures seems to act upon the Epicurean Principle---Ex quibus tanta percipitur voluptas ut interdum Pro-nocæ nostra Epicurea fuisse videatur.

labour

Labour in, &c. He adds, * That it is evidently concluded by every one of these obvious considerations, that all Things in the World are admirably order'd by the *Divine Mind* and *Counsel* to the Preservation of the whole and general Good.

AND as the Heavenly Bodies do act according to a *Divine Law* given to them, so in every part of *Nature*, we may observe a like manifest *Adaptation* of Things, that they both suit to one another, and to the Use and Services of Men.

NOT to insist on Illustrations of this as to the *Air* or the *Watry World*, their Inhabitants, Qualities and Properties, by some of which *Navigation* and *Commerce* is carry'd on, and thereby a general Distribution of the Gifts of Nature provided for; to omit these and abundance of Considerations of this Nature, let us only make a short Remark upon the *Vegetable World*, upon the *Earth* and its *Fruits*, and then proceed to some Observations upon the *lesser Natural World*, the *Human Body*. A Subject that has often afforded even to the *Antients*, and therefore may much more to the *Moderns*, copious and notable Arguments for a *Divine Providence*.

IF it were not for the *General Blessing* of GOD upon the *Earth* to produce its *Fruits* at their proper and wonted Seasons, suitable to the Use of Men, in *vain* would Men use their busiest Care and Labour, in *vain* would they expect to see them rise, grow and multi-

* Sic undique omni ratione concluditur mente consilioque divino omnia in hoc Mundo ad salutem omnium conservationemque admirabiliter administrari.

ply, so as no mere Art and Labour of Man could ever be capable of effecting.

I WILL not say with some (who quote St. AUSTIN for it) that it is as wonderful and surprizing to see the Corn shoot out of the Earth and multiply in the *ordinary* Way, as to have seen the *miraculous* multiplying of Loaves when our SAVIOUR fed the Multitudes therewith, any more than I would suppose *particular Wills* and the *special Interventions* of GOD, in relation to those *Cedars and Trees*, of which the Holy Scriptures say, that the Lord *had planted them*. For I take the *special Will* of GOD, and his *immediate* Agency to be interpos'd in *one* Case, and not in the *other*. But it is a just Observation, and a good Foundation for our Gratitude, that the giving Food *either Way*, is to be referr'd *ultimately* to GOD.

THE *Earth and Seed*, and all Manner of *second Causes*, are no otherwise fruitful or operative, but only in Virtue of that *original Order, Disposition, and Benediction* of GOD.

He bringeth forth Grass for the Cattle, and green Herb for the Service of Men, that He may bring Food out of the Earth, and Wine that maketh glad the Heart of Man, and Oil to make him a chearful Countenance, and Bread to strengthen Man's Heart, Ps. 104. v. 14. 15. He also giveth Medicine to heal our Diseases.

THE PROVIDENCE of GOD is discernible in that He has given in *general medicinal* Virtues to Plants and Herbs. There have been several curious Observations made of a like Nature to that of Mr. Herbert.

*Where Poisons are there Antidotes are most;
The Help stands close, and keeps the Fear in view.*

D

SUCH

SUCH Plants its said are most *natural* and *plentiful* in several Countries, as have Virtues most suitable to the Distempers which the Inhabitants respectively are subject to; most *accommodate* to their Climate, and Temperament as it is affected by the Climate.

HOWEVER this may be, it is certain that the *Suitableness*, and *mutually assistant* Influences of the several Parts and Materials of this *lesser World the Humane Body*, as well as the proper Qualities GOD has put into *extrinsic* Matter, as *Air, Food, and Medicine* to repair the continual *insensible Decays*, or the *grosser Dilapidations* of these earthly Tabernacles; these are most *obvious*, or all of them *at least real* Arguments for our grateful Acknowledging of GOD, and the admirable Wisdom of His PROVIDENCE.

THEY who are skill'd in *Anatomy* and the Structure and Fabrick of the human Body can easily read us such Lectures upon the Numbers and *Uses* of minute Vessels of which it is compos'd; how curiously and wonderfully they are set together; how easily broken and disconcerted; what Numbers of little *Channels* and *Conveyances* belong to the *Fountain* of Life, to distribute the vital Juices into, and circulate them thro' the several remoter Vessels. They can acquaint us by what *small Impediments* they are obstructed and put out of Order, so as to cause not only Pain or Sickness; but if ever the *Silver Cord* be loos'd; or the *Golden Bowl* be broken, or the *Pitcher* be broken at the *Fountain*; or the *Wheel* broken at the *Cistern*; as *Solomon* expresses several dangerous Affections of the principal Organs of the Body, *then shall the Dust return to the Earth as it was, and the Spirit shall*
return

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return unto God who gave it. So that when these things are duely consider'd, and added to the Consideration of the external Accidents to which our *Bodies* are liable, tho' the *Term* of human Life seldom does extend farther than to about *three* or *four score* Years, the *Miracle* seems to be how it should be lengthen'd out *so far*, and that so *delicate* a Structure so expos'd to Injuries and to Ruin should *last so long*.

WHEN I say the *Miracle* I mean it not in the strict and proper Sense, that being a matter of another Consideration, and to be treated of distinctly in its proper place. And though the Wisdom of GOD in all his Dispensations and Provisions of every Sort whether *general* or *special* is very admirable and wonderful, yet we are not necessarily to attribute the things (whether it be the Preservation of our Lives to old Age or others) that we have reason to admire to a *strictly miraculous* or indeed to *any* * *special* Operation of GOD. We ought rather to ascribe things to the *ordinary Providence* and *Goodness* of GOD where there are not extraordinary Reasons for us to suppose and speak of *special Interpositions* of GOD, and much more of *proper Miracles*.

GOD has *ordinarily provided* a due *Balance* against all these Evils and Infirmities which threaten immaturer Death to Mankind than would be consistent with the Ends of his Wisdom; and so again he has provided a *Balance* of *natural Evils* proper to the *Condition* of Men *here*, till Death (the great natural Evil *το βεβηρωτον παντων κακων* †) puts an End to this their

* See the Appendix.

† Aristotle.

probationary Life; GOD has provided thus, I say, by a *Disposition* and *Suitableness* of things infinitely surpassing human Skill or Reach.

THIS manifest and sensible *Suitableness* and *Adaptation* in reference to the *Body* of Man is very often spoken of by those whose *Province* and *Profession* it is to be conversant about it. I will instance particularly in the * *Author* of a late *Essay on Health and long Life*, who accounts for several *Phænomena* by an *harmonious and commensurate Action or Touch*, he asserts " that it is always *commensurate and musical* " *Strokes* that create agreeable Sensations in regard to " all the *other Senses* as well as that of *Hearing*," and that Sir ISAAC NEWTON has made this plain in *Vision*. " It is the same likewise, says he, as to the " *Soul*; Truth and Beauty or Perfection, the only " *Objects* that give Pleasure to the Understanding " and Will, being nothing but *Harmony* or *just Proportion in the respective Objects*; that both in *Soul*, " and *Body* in their *original make*, as they came from " the Hands of their CREATOR, all was *Harmony* " and *Concord*, and that the *Union* of them *Life* it " self consists in a *pre-establish'd HARMONY* by the " *Will* of the CREATOR."

THE *Harmony* that relates to the *Soul* and all the *Moral World* must be referr'd to *another Place*; I am only considering what Regards the *Natural* and *Material World* at present, of which the *Body of Man* is a very curious Part, and a sort of *Material World in Miniature*. But this admirable *Fabrick* is it not subject to

* Dr. Cheyne.

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Decays and Ruin? and can there be any *Goodness* any *Harmony* in its *Decays* and in its *Dissolution*? It would not be agreeable to Method to answer this Question *here at large*, otherwise it would not be impossible to shew that this also is contributive to the *general Harmony* of Things. *Health* and *Strength*, *Vigour* and *Beauty* are *sensibly* Harmonious, and have a *visible* Symmetry. *Deformity*, *Diseases*, *Calamities*, *Death*, in a word, all *natural Evil whatever*, that Mankind on this Stage of Tryal is expos'd to, have a Sympathy and Harmony *not manifest* indeed to the Senses, but which upon *extending* the View discovers it self to our *Reason* and *Faith*. This is a more *complicated Musick*, that takes in a much *greater compass* of Notes, and only discernible to the Mind that exerts it self in a *wide extended* Scene. It may be call'd in the Words of an antient Author tho' not so there apply'd *παλινῶν ἀρμονία ἢ πρὸς τοὺς διὰ τῶν ἐναντίων* a *repercussive Harmony* that results from Contraries.

INSTEAD of making out the *rational* Proof of this at present, let us believe and say with the *Wise Man*, that GOD hath set Health and Sicknes, Prosperities and Calamities, and all manner of *natural* Good and Evil, *one over against the other*; for it is of these he is speaking where he says, GOD also hath set the *one over against the other to the end that Man should find nothing after him* i. e. say Expositors, nothing that he could *blame*, or that wanted to be *mended*; where the Version of the Septuagint is *καὶ γὰρ ὁν τὶτω συμπόνως τὶτο ἐποίησεν ὁ Θεός* God hath set one in *Symphony* to the other. *Eccl. vii. 14.*

SINCE

SINCE I have enter'd upon the Argument of a *Good Providence over Men* from the *Structure of the human Body*, it will not be improper to give an Instance in that which is not common to them with *Brutes*, but *distinguishes Human Bodies principally* from those of *irrational Creatures*.

THUS Man's *erect Posture* and *Aspect* has rightly been urg'd as an Argument of GOD's Providence, being generally look'd upon as a divine Admonition to Man to be *conscious of his Dignity*, and rather look up to *Heaven*, to have Intercourse with *kindred Spirits*, and the DEITY it self, than as brute Beasts wholly to *regard the Earth* and its *Products*. But that which I here chiefly mean is *articulate Voice*, or the *Faculty of Speech*.

PROVIDENCE has furnish'd Men with this admirable Faculty to make the Divine Gift of *Reason* more useful and accommodate to the Circumstances of humane State. By means of *this*, under the Conduct and Guidance of *Reason*, by *this* HARP (to allude to *antient Fable* or *Mythology*) Men are led from *wild* and *barbarous* into *social* and *civil Life*, for which they are not only *peculiarly qualified*, but have evidently a *natural Appetite*, and strong Inclination, which *Reason* perfectly approves, and urges to exert.

I MEAN not to enlarge in such a *Common-place* as it would be to recount the many Benefits that accrue to Men by their *Faculty of Speech*; but I would only observe, that no Man can look into that part of *Anatomy*, which Science is vastly improv'd by the Moderns, without being of the same Mind that CICERO was, that *Nature* (a Word that is often us'd by him

as

as synonymous to that of *Providence*) has furnish'd Men with the admirable *Faculty of Speech* not without a great deal of *Apparatus* and *Contrivance*. *Ad usum Orationis incredibile est, nisi diligenter attenderis, quanta opera machinata Natura est.* De N. D. lib. 2.

I HAD above compared the *Tongue* to an *Amphion's Harp* by *figurative* Allusion, but TULLY with several others of Note, do compare it thus even *literally*, since by the Help of the contiguous Parts, and particularly the *Teeth*, say they as *Strings*, it modulates the Sounds which were brought thither from the *Lungs* through the *Aspera Arteria* rough and *inarticulate*.

How would his *Admiration* have been still increas'd, if he had known the *Use* and *Action* of other *Organs* that are employ'd in *articulate Voice*; had he known that the *Larynx* alone for instance is furnish'd with several *Cartilages*, and no less than thirteen *Muscles* for this Service, had he known the *complicated Contexture*, and *Action* of these *Muscles*; in short had he had the advantages that *Moderns* have, to have read a *Willis*, a *Bellini*, or a *Boerhaave's* Treatises, and to have seen and heard a *Bidloo*, a *Chefelden*, or a *St. Andre*, at their *Dissections*. And as this was thought a considerable Instance of *GOD's Goodness and Providence* by *CICERO*, so we find it was also by *Euripides* In *Supplicibus* v. 195, and *seq.* where amongst the Arguments for *GOD's Goodness*, and to prove that Men have more good than evil Things, he makes several Observations much the same with those which I have alledg'd, of the *Vicissitude* of *Day* and *Night*; of the *Fruits* of the *Earth* being cherished with the *Rain* and *Dew* of *Heaven*, till they are mature for the Service

Service of Men; of the wide *Sea* being *navigable* for the Intercourse and Correspondence of Men of distant Countries for their mutual Advantage; of the *Cold Winds* being properly *set against* and qualifying *hot scorching Air*, and amongst the rest, this Argument which I have last mentioned. *For I praise God*, says his THESEUS, *who distinguish'd Human Living from that of Beasts, first giving us Reason, and then a Tongue, the Messenger of our Minds whereby our Words and Reason are convey'd and communicated to one another.*

IT may be expected that I should produce the *Passage* it self, and the rather, because it suits so *particular-ly* and *exactly* to what I have been arguing, that it may almost seem an *Abstract* drawn from the *foregoing Observations*.

IT is thus :

Εγὼ δὲ τέτοις ἀντίαν γνώμην ἔχω,
Πλείω τὰ χρηστὰ πῶν κακῶν εἶναι βροτοῖς.
Εἰ μὴ γὰρ ἦν τόδ', ἔκ αὖ ἡμεν ἐν φάει.
Αἰνῶ δ' ὅς ἡμῖν βίον ἐκ πεφυμένον
Καὶ θνητῶδες θεῶν διασθμήσασθαι.
Πρῶτα μὲν ἐνδεῖς σύνεστιν. εἶσα δ' ἄγγελον
Γλαῶσαν λόγων δ' ἔς, ὥς γινώσκων ὅπα,
Τρωφὴν τε καρπῷ, τῇ τροφῇ τ' ἀπ' ἕραν
Σταγόνας ὑδρηλάς, ὡς τὰ γ' ἐκ γαίας τρέφει.
Ἀρδ' ἢ τε νηδύν· πρὸς δὲ τοῖσι χέμαλος
Προβλήματ' αἶδον ἐξαμύνεσθαι θεῷ,
Πόντ' ἢ τε ναυσολήμαδ' ὡς διαλλαγὰς
Εἰχοιμὴν ἀλλήλοισιν ὧν πένοντο γῆ.

PARALLEL to which, and very proper to be mention'd here, are those Verses of *Claudian*, where he
shortly

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shortly touches some of the Arguments upon the Strength of which he establish'd himself in the Belief of a DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

Sæpe mihi dubiam traxit sententiâ mentem,
Curarent superi terras, an nullus inesset
Rector, & incerto fluerent mortalia casu.
Nam cum dispositi quæsissem fœdera Mundi,
Præscriptosque maris fines, annisque meatus,
Et lucis noctisque vices ; tunc omnia rebar
Consilio firmata Dei, qui lege moveri
Sidera, qui fruges diverso tempore nasci,
Qui variam Phæben alieno jussit igne
Compleri solemque suo ; porrexerit undis
Litora ; tellurem medio libraverit axe.

I SHALL give a Translation of these Verses that is something upon the *Paraphrastic*: but where it is most so, it is not so much the *Argument* and *Spirit* of the Author, as the *mere Letter* in those Places that is departed from. It is thus :

Oft doubtful Thoughts had vext my anxious Soul,
Unsure if *Heav'n* with *providential Care*
Watch'd over Men ; or all was *wretched Chance*.
But when with due Attention I survey'd
The *Beauteous World* and all its SYMMETRY ;
The Bounds prescrib'd to stop the threat'ning Sea ;
Annual revolving Seasons ; *Night* and *Day* ;
To give Variety of Food ; to interchange
Sweet Rest with Toils, with Mirth, with Cares ;
A DEITY I own'd, not indolent,
Or careless of what pass'd below, who gave

E

Sure

Sure Laws of Motion to th' obedient *Stars*
 Of Heav'n : who bade the *Earth's fair Fruits*
 Each in its proper Season rise to deck
 The Face of Nature, and to gladden Man :
 Ordain'd the various *Moon* its borrow'd Light
 To lend, diminishing *Night's* horrid Shade,
 Who made the *Sun* with *underived* Beams
 To rule the *Day*; and pois'd the *pendulous Earth*.

IF I shall be thought to have been long upon this Argument for *Divine Providence* in reference to the *material* World that is taken from Observations upon the *lesser World* or *Body of Man*, it may be perhaps a sufficient Apology to represent the Sentiment of a *celebrated Author* † concerning *Anatomy*, and preference of that Science to the Knowledge of *Celestial Bodies*.

‘ THERE have been *Kings* and *Princes*, says he, that
 ‘ boasted of being *Astronomers*, because the Height and
 ‘ Magnitude of the *Stars* seem'd to suit their Dignity
 ‘ and Grandeur, and because of this sensible Idea of
 ‘ Grandeur they give, the *Celestial Bodies* have been in
 ‘ all Ages the Objects either of the *Study* or of the *Vene-*
 ‘ *ration* of a great part of Mankind. But the *Body of*
 ‘ *Man* is more admirable, and deserves more our Ap-
 ‘ plication than what ever we can know of *Saturn*, *Ju-*
 ‘ *piter* and other Planets. It is a *useful* Knowledge, as
 ‘ it contributes to the easing our Infirmities, and miti-
 ‘ gating our Miseries, and it shews forth the *Power* and
 ‘ *Wisdom* of GOD to those that attentively consider it,

* Malbranch.

‘ more than all that the *Astronomers* know concerning
 ‘ the *Heavens* ; yet the *Body of Man*, says he, has re-
 ‘ main’d a long Time almost unknown, it is but a few
 ‘ Years since Men of Parts have look’d upon *Anatomy*
 ‘ as a Science that deserved their Study.’

BUT however, even with that imperfect and low
 Degree of Knowledge that the *Antients* had of *Ana-
 tomy*, we find they frequently urge Arguments from
 thence in *vindicating* or *illustrating* the PROVIDENCE
 OF GOD ; TULLY in particular is so copious on
 it, that in *Balbus’s* Defence of *Providence* in *Lib. 2.*
de Nat. Deor. there are above a dozen Pages, ac-
 cording to the last Edition, taken up in this *single*
Topick ; and I persuade my self there must be very few,
 if any, who have seen that curious and exquisite Piece
 of Art, THE ANATOMY OF HUMAN BODIES
 brought over some time since from *France*, to whom
 such kind of Thoughts do not readily occur ; or who
 would not easily believe this Argument for a *Divine*
Providence might be much further urg’d by those who
 have more than a superficial and slender Knowledge of
 such Matters, which however may in this Case be suffi-
 cient to form a general Argument upon of considerable
 Weight.

THESE, and many more such Considerations do
 sufficiently evidence the *Paternal Goodness*, and *Provi-
 dential Care* of GOD towards us, and *illustrate* the
 glorious and lovely *Attributes* of HIM who *presides over*
the World. When DAVID had employ’d his Thoughts
 thus on the various and manifold Instances of *God’s*
Providence and Goodness of this sort (which is the sub-
 ject of several and most particularly of the 104th

Pſalm) it was natural to his Piety to break out in rapturous Exclamations in the midſt of the Enumeration. O Lord how manifold are thy Works? in Wiſdom haſt thou made them all! and St. Paul inſtructs us that * God left not Himſelf without a Witneſs in that He did good and gave us Rain from Heaven and fruitful Seasons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladneſs.



CHAP. II.

Of God's ſpecial Interpoſitions.

IN the former Chapter I have ſhewn that GOD hath not left Himſelf without a Witneſs as to general Proviſions for Mankind in reſpect to ourward Things. But now we advance ſtill further to obſerve that the great Maker and Governour of the World has not precluded himſelf from INTERPOSING at any Time He ſhall think fit to effect things that are out of this ordinary and ſtated Courſe. And here I ſhall not confine my ſelf, for a † Reaſon already mention'd, to a diſtinct Conſideration of his ſeveral Interpoſitions, as they may refer more eſpecially either to the material or the moral World.

THE Interpoſitions I mean are either MIRACLES, or PROPHECIES, or laſtly EXTRA-ORDINARY PROVIDENCES, which we do not call properly miraculous, and yet have Reaſon to believe that GOD does ſpecially interpoſe in them.

* Acts xiv. 17.

† See the Preface.

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FOR I shall not enter into the Particulars of those *large and dark Disputes* that have been concerning *LOTS*. Many I know have been persuaded, that there is *always* a *special Interposition* of *GOD* in *LOTS*. *LOTS* may properly be made an Argument (as *PROPHECIES* and *MIRACLES* will be urg'd as Evidences) of a *SPECIAL PROVIDENCE* of *GOD*, because we find it upon Record in *Scripture*, that *GOD's Providence* did *specialy* exert it self in several Cases in and by *LOTS* made use of by his *Command* and *Appointment*.

BUT for *LOTS* which in *these* Ages of the World Men think fit to make use of without any such Authority, there is no good Reason can be given, why we should suppose a *special Intervention* of *GOD* in them more than in other Occurrences. The *Reasons* I have for this Judgment I do not think it necessary to give *now*, nor at all to enter into the *detail* of them. They will be in *part* discern'd in the *Appendix* to this *Essay*, and *for the rest* I shall refer the Reader that desires further Satisfaction to what our Learned *Gataker* has said, and especially to what the Learned Mr. *Le Clerc* has more fully and clearly argu'd upon that Subject in his *Reflections sur le Bonheur & le Malheur*.

NOW our Argument cannot proceed altogether in this as in the *former Chapter*, where the things spoken of were commonly matters that lie open to every one's Observation, so that his own Eyes or Senses can be Witnesses to them. Here we must make use of and rely upon *Authority* and *Testimonies Human* or *Divine*, especially as to *MIRACLES* which are long since ceased.

AND

AND we may with † GROTIUS and others observe in relation to miraculous Events, that it is a sufficient Proof of *God's special Interposition* that they *have been at all*, so that they be testify'd and transmitted to us with all Marks of Credibility that could in Reason be requir'd, and we may as well collect from the *Wisdom* of GOD that he should be *sparing* in such manifestations of himself, when there is *not* occasion and necessity for them as that He should be ready so to interpose when there *was* a proper Occasion, as *e. g.* when the *true Worship* of Him was maintain'd only in a very small Corner of the World (a Circumstance that requir'd *Miracles*) or when the *Christian* Religion was *first* to be propagated, and establish'd in the World. But when a sufficient Evidence had been given to it and its Divine Authority in the several Parts of the World, then a miraculous Power ceas'd as the Reason of it did.

WHAT is here said, may be apply'd to *remarkable Providences not directly miraculous*, and to their comparative Rareness or Unfrequency in these Days. There was more occasion for and use of them to those of old Time, than now there is; and without entering far into particular Arguments from their peculiar Circumstances, we may observe generally that remarkable and *special* Tokens of GOD's *Favour*, and *Providential Demonstrations* of his *Justice* here in *this* Life, were more requisite to the ancient People of GOD, since under that Dispensation it had not pleased Him to reveal a *Judgment to come*, and the things of *another*

† Lib. de Veritat. Christ. Rel.

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ther Life but very *imperfectly* and *darkly*, by obscure Expressions and typical Shadows, till the Veil on *Moses's* Face was taken away by CHRIST, and Life and Immortality by him were brought to Light.

THE *Clearness* of the GOSPEL in the main Inducements to a good Life, and the more plentiful Effusions of the HOLY SPIRIT upon all Flesh, to produce a more filial Obedience thereunto do (as † a judicious Divine has well observ'd) render it less necessary that we should have *sensible* Motives by *signal Dispensations of Providence* here to such a Degree as *they* had; especially since we have them which were exhibited in those Ages, deliver'd down even to us, upon whom the Ends of the World are come, by holy Men of GOD for our Admonition.

It is a nice and difficult Matter to determine exactly how long MIRACLES continu'd in the *Christian Age*.

ONE of the greatest Men the Reformation has had to boast of the Learned GROTIUS in his Book above referr'd to, and his Annotations on it, speaks of several such *Divine Interpositions*, and Events that are *directly miraculous* even in the *later Ages* of this *Ara*.

CERTAINLY if it be admitted that Persons accus'd of Crimes have appeal'd to Heaven, and without fraudulent Arts have walk'd on *burning Bars of Iron* unhurt, it was a good Evidence of their Innocence; and at the same time of a *Divine Providence* in *that Notion* of it which we are now considering, *i. e.* as special and extraordinary.

† Dr. Simon Ford.

THAT such like Vindications of Person's Innocency, or Detection of their Guilt, in a Way exceeding the Powers, and out of the Course of Nature, *have been*, we are assur'd upon the *Authority* from which we have above been arguing.

THERE have been many *pretended* Facts of this Nature amongst the *Heathens*, and perhaps amongst the *Christians* too, which have been vehemently suspected of Fraud and Artifice, and * *Varro* it seems attributed that of the *Hirpi's* walking upon burning Cinders unhurt to Ointments and Art, which no doubt the *Vulgar* look'd upon in the view that † *Virgil* gives it us as a *Miracle*, where he represents *Aruns* as attributing it to *Apollo's* special Favour as a Reward for the singular and extraordinary Piety of that Family, that

—*Naked they trod unhurt the burning Coals.*

WHETHER there were indeed *Divine Interpositions* of this sort among the antient *Grecians*, as *Grotius* seems to think, or not; or whether they were vouchsaf'd amongst *Christians* in the *middle Ages* of the Church, it is not necessary to our Argument to determine. Our Cause needs not such precarious Arguments, and it must be allow'd to be the *commoner* Opinion of *Protestants*, that *Miracles* had ceas'd long before the Ages that I last was speaking of,

To rest the Point therefore upon its *strongest* and *proper Basis*, the *Holy Scriptures* do give us indubitable

* See Dr. Bentley's Piece under the Name of Phileleutherus Lipfienfis.

† Quem primi colimus, cui pineus ardor acervo
Pascitur, & medium freti pietate per Ignem
Cultores multâ premimus vestigia prunâ.

Accounts (and the Instances are so well known and so very numerous, that I need not descend to Particulars) both of *Miracles* and of *Predictions* of Things to come, impossible to be foreseen by *Men* by their *natural Causes*, and having many Times no Manner of Dependance at all upon them.

THESE are things, I say, which we cannot have Knowledge or Perswasion of but by *Testimony*, and that may be either *human* or *divine*. For tho' we may plainly see, and have Knowledge of the *Facts* which are *Accomplishments* of antient Prophecies, yet it is *Faith* and such Kind of Evidence as I am speaking of by which we are perswaded that the Predictions were really previous to the Event.

SOME have believ'd *extraordinary Providences* and *Miracles* wrought by MOSES and others of which the *Scriptures* speak, with a mere *human Faith*.

FOR here are many extraordinary and miraculous Manifestations of a Divine Power and Presence declar'd and testify'd by the Eye-witnesses thereof, who were Men of Credit and Esteem, whereas they must have easily been detected, and consequently discredited and render'd infamous, if they had publickly declar'd and recorded those things for notorious Truths which thousands of living Persons could have contradicted them in and prov'd a Forgery.

AND as MOSES in particular is honourably spoken of by several of the antient *Pagan Writers*; as some of them do confirm some of his Accounts in other Points, so the *miraculous* and *special Interpositions* of GOD which he speaks of, have also in

some * Instances *such foreign Attestation*. I may instance particularly in GOD's great and remarkable Interposál, and exerting his just Vengeance on the Wickedness of Men by a *general Deluge*, and towards some particular Cities, *viz.* those of *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah* in consuming them with Brimstone and Fire out of Heaven. And it appears that *Julian* who apostatiz'd from the *Christian Religion*, and consequently departed from the *Belief of Scripture*, as founded upon *Divine Authority*, yet thought it reasonable to admit the Truth of *some miraculous Interpositions* of GOD which are there recorded.

THE Acknowledgment of a *few Miracles*, with so delicate and partial a Believer as he was, might indeed be sufficient to establish the *Belief of a special Providence*, tho' *not sufficient* to other Purposes and Points of greatest Importance.

MANY were the *Miracles* wrought by *MOSES* and the rest of the *Prophets*; so numerous and so well known that I need not descend to Particulars.

“ THE Elements were chang'd in themselves by
 “ a kind of Harmony (as the † wise Man expresses himself in his Description of some of these Interpositions, and this a kind of Harmony resulting from Contraries) “ for earthly things were turned
 “ into wat'ry, and the things that before swam in the
 “ Water now went upon the Ground. The Fire
 “ had Power in the Water, forgetting his own Vir-

* Vid. Grot. de Verit. Christ. Rel. Lib. i. mo & Annot.

† See *Book of Wisdom*, c. ult.

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“ tue: And the Water forgot his own quenching
 “ Nature. The Flames wasted not the Flesh of the
 “ corruptible living things though they walked there-
 “ in, neither melted they the icy kind of heavenly
 “ Meat that was of Nature apt to melt, when God
 “ did magnify and assist his People.”

THE *Jews* have reckon'd up 76 *Miracles* for *Moses*, and 74 for all the rest of the *Prophets*. But CHRIST did more Actions divine and powerful than *all the Prophets* ever did. His *Miracles* were so evident, that his Enemies could not deny them, but ascrib'd them to *Magical Arts*, and the Power of the *Devil*, whereas they were prov'd to be otherwise by the visible *permanent* as well as *salutary Effects* of them. Besides, it was most absurd to suppose that the *Devil* should help to establish a Religion which was so *opposite* to him and all his Works, or that GOD would suffer such Marks of a *Divine Authority* to be given to a *Diabolical Imposture*, as it was utterly impossible for Men to find the Falsity of, and such as made it unreasonable not to acknowledge them for *Divine Attestations*.

MANY were the antient *Prophecies* of things to come at a great distance of Time, which were exactly verif'y'd, and without any Failure.

THE *Destruction of Jerusalem* with many Particulars of what came to pass (and is related by *Josephus*, a *Jewish*, not a *Christian* Writer) was foretold very minutely and with *circumstantial Exactness* by our B. Saviour, as it had also been foretold by the *antient Prophets*, and particularly by *Zechariah*, c. 14. And to the fulfilling of the *frequent Prophecies* of the *Rejection* of the *Jews* with the most eminent Marks of Distinction,

many Ages in a long Succession have been Witnesses, as we are at this Day; and that the *Prophecies* were *ex post facto* fitted to the Event, is a thing impossible to have been practis'd, amongst many other Reasons, because the *Jews* themselves have been as well as *Christians* the *Depositories* and *religious Preservers* of them.

MALBRANCH amongst his many singular Opinions, thinks that the things which happened to the *Jews* at and about the Time of *Our SAVIOUR* probably were not *miraculous*. " 'Tis true, says he, there " seems to be something extraordinary in the Desolation of the *Jews*; but as it shews greater Wisdom " in GOD to produce so surprizing Effects by the " most simple and *general Laws* of Nature than by " *particular Wills* (which are always *Miracles*) I question whether on that occasion we are to fly to a " *Miracle*.

BUT what I am going to transcribe from the same Author is more cautiously and wisely said, I think.

" IT is true, says he, that all that befel the *Jews*— " was not a necessary Consequence of the Order of " *Nature*; there was need of *Miracles* to make the " *Jews* lively and express Figures of the Church, " but *Nature* at least furnish'd *Ground-work* and *Materials*, and possibly the *principal Strokes* in most Instances, and *Miracles* finish'd the rest; whereas no " other Nation would have been so proper for so " just and so accomplish'd a Design."

NOW the Accomplishment of any *one* such Prediction will destroy the *Epicurean Scheme* of Chance if that can be called a *Scheme*. But the Accomplishment

ment of *many* of them, and in a *manner* that is miraculous too, does sufficiently establish what we are at present asserting, that GOD has not left *Himself* and his *Providence* without the oft repeated Witness of his *special and immediate Interposals*.

THERE is no difficulty that occurs in relation to Events wherein *only the material World* is concern'd, whether these Events arrive *extraordinarily* or by the *Course of Nature*.

THE Difficulty is in regard to *those* Events wherein the *Will of Man* has any Concern.

FOR whether we say that GOD foretels *some*, as He foresees *all* the Motions and Determinations of our *Will* which continues nevertheless *equally free* as if they had never been *foretold* nor *foreseen*; or we suppose in the Cases of such Events foretold, that they are *no longer contingent or truly free*, but that there is in those Instances a *temporary and partial Inhibition* of human Liberty; or whether we should suppose that GOD does *not foresee* such Events where the *Will of Man* is concern'd with *absolute and physical Certainty*, but that he foresees them with a *moral Certainty*, greater than that with which it may be foretold that a Man who is habituated to a certain Virtue or Vice, and about to meet with Objects that will awaken his Habits, will *exert Acts* that are proper to them, which yet is not done by *Mechanism or absolute Necessity*. Whichsoever of these shall be suppos'd, a Man will find his *Hypothesis* encumber'd with some Difficulties.

THE *first* is what is most commonly said whilst its Difficulties are obvious and generally acknowledg'd, as they ever must be by those that are ingenuous, and
who

who have not either *much less* or *infinitely more* Penetration than is common to Men.

MEN of the greatest * Depth and Learning therefore only argue to this Effect, that GOD's *fore-knowledge* of all future Events is expressly taught in *Holy Scripture*, and is likewise the necessary Consequence of the *natural Notions* we have of GOD consider'd as the *Governor of the World*. The *Holy Scripture*, say they, testifies GOD's *fore-knowledge* of those Events which are properly *contingent*, and depend upon the *voluntary Determinations* of *free Agents*; and it appears that such Events *have often been foretold*; and when any Truth is thus establish'd, especially such an important one, it must firmly be adhered to, notwithstanding that some Difficulties do arise in relation to it, which we cannot perfectly account for, and which are to be charged to the Account of our own Ignorance.

THE *second Opinion* is, That where a Man's Actions are *foretold*, *Man's Nature* in respect of a free and self-motive Principle is put under a *Restraint* in *this*, as in *other extraordinary Interpositions* of GOD, the Fire or other Elements, in the wise Man's Expression, forgot their own Nature; that there is in those Instances a temporary and partial Inhibition of human Liberty.

THIS Opinion seems to be countenanced in a *late Sermon* † preached with Applause before one of our *Universities*, and publish'd at the Request of the Vice-Chancellor, &c. in the following Passage.

* Bp. Burnet, Dr. Lupton, &c.

† At Cambridge by Mr. Newcome.

“ IF the *Prophecies* of CHRIST had been more particular, it would have been impossible without a *Series of Miracles*, or a TOTAL OVERTHROW OF HUMAN LIBERTY, to have preserv’d him from his Nativity to his Manhood in so perverse and wicked a Generation.”

Is any thing less imply’d in this than that Predictions of things in which Mens Wills are concern’d, do imply and require to their Accomplishment *some Necessity* and *partial Inhibition of their Liberty*, and that Men act in those particular Instances not from a free Principle within themselves, but by external Force and Compulsion? It is possible I may be mistaken in collecting this, and neither the *Heads of Colleges* nor the *Preacher* himself might favour such Notions; but whose Opinion soever this may be which I have represented, *it has its Difficulties*, as it destroys Mens *free Agency*, and by a Consequence their *Accountableness* in some Instances where the *Holy Scripture* seems to represent them as greatest Sinners.

As to the third Opinion which supposes that Events, wherein the *Will of Men* is concern’d, are not *foreseen by GOD with physical and absolute Certainty*. It may be said that this *moral Certainty* is not very short of an *absolute Certainty*, since GOD knows the Strength of a Man’s Habits, and the Circumstances of things about him.

It may be urged also, that if Men, as absolutely speaking they have the Power to do so, should exert *other kind of Acts* than what are proper to, and do most naturally arise from their *Habits* and *Circumstances* so that the *Predictions* of GOD shall not indeed take
Place,

Place, as that *e. g.* about the Destruction of *Niniveh* never did, still these *Predictions* even upon this Supposition would attain their truest End, and all the *Essential Purposes of GOD* have their certain Accomplishment. Or otherwise it might be argu'd (with less Liableness perhaps to an Imputation of *Heterodoxy* or of *Singularity*) that even *those Predictions* might be verifi'd in some *other secondary* and *less proper* Manner.

THIS must have been the Case it is urg'd if *GOD*, as He was about to have done, should have cut off the *Israelites*, to whom pertain'd so many Promises, in the *Wilderness*. For though *he* could have made of *MOSES* a *great Nation*, that would have been equally descended from *ABRAHAM* and *JACOB*, yet *Jacob's Prediction* of things which were to befall, and did befall each of the twelve *Tribes* after that Time, seem capable in that Case of *no other* Solution, but what is agreeable to this Notion; I mean the third Opinion in general, which though all these things may plausibly be pleaded in its Defence, I do not say is *free of Difficulties*, neither dare I aver that it is *Orthodox*.

BUT whatever the Difficulties may be, it is necessary to admit such *Prophecies*, unless we will discredit *all Testimony whatever*, the best of *human* Witness, and that which shews it self to be *Divine*, and in some Instances refuse to believe things that our *own Senses* too might convince us of.

THERE is *one Prediction*, which being of all others the *most eminent* and *important*, and fulfill'd too in a *manner* most notably *miraculous*, must not be omitted, although for brevity sake I propos'd not to enter into the Induction of particulars, and that is

OUR

OUR Blessed Lord's foretelling as indeed it came to pass that He should rise the third Day from the Dead; a most certain and undeniable Evidence that his Doctrine was true, that he was in a most special and extraordinary Manner sent by GOD to publish his WILL, and to be the SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD.

AND not only Himself foretold what should come to pass concerning Himself, but all the Prophets prophesied of Him; they spoke many Ages before both of his Glory and of his previous Death and Sufferings, as if they had been Eye-witnesses thereof, and describe the Manner of his Death by Crucifixion, whilst yet (as Dr. Heylin I think somewhere says) there was no such kind of Punishment known or heard of amongst the Jews, nor at all practis'd any where in the whole World perhaps at the time of this Prophecy.

THESE Miracles therefore, and Accomplishments of ancient Prophecies, in conjunction with internal Arguments for the Divine Authority of the Scriptures oblige us to acknowledge them written by a Divine Inspiration, and so these are direct and full Proofs of the Matter under Consideration to us Christians, who profess so to receive and reverence them.

THERE were holy Men, said the Venerable Father to JUSTIN MARTYR when he converted him to the Christian Faith, there were holy Men of old time before the PLATO's, and other celebrated Philosophers, Men greatly beloved of GOD, who inspir'd by GOD'S SPIRIT, foretold Things to come, and that have been, and now are, who were called PROPHETS; The Things, says he, which have happen'd and do still

G

come

come to pass, do extort and force our Assent to what they have said.

BUT now besides *Predictions* and *direct proper Miracles* the *Scriptures* do uncontestably afford us many glorious Instances of a more *especial Providence*; Marks of an invisible Power, such as evidently point out Events in a peculiar Sense to be *GOD's own Work*.

THE whole History of the *Jews*, as it is recorded in the Old and New Testament, is a Comment and Exemplification of this *remarkable Providence* exerted in Favour of them, when they obey'd the Laws of God, and in punishing them when they were disobedient. For, as *Achior* told *Holofernes*, *when they sinned not before God they prospered, because the God that hateth Iniquity was with them; but when they departed from the Way that He appointed them, they were destroy'd in many Battels very sore, and were led captive into a Land that was not theirs, and the Temple of their God was cast to the Ground, and their Cities were taken by their Enemies*.

SEVERAL of these Providences were indeed such as are to be referred to the Head of Miracles.

[† BUT yet many other of those great *Deliverances* which God wrought for that People were brought about by Means *ordinary* and *usual*, if we consider them

† I profess myself much indebted in this Argument to a Sermon preached and published at YORK by the Reverend Mr. TERRICK late Canon-Residentiary of that Church, whose Memory is dear to all that knew him, in the Number now of those purer and happier Souls, who can discover more of the Beauty and Harmony of Divine Providence than here we are able to do. I have given an Epitome of his Argument in those Paragraphs included in a Parathesis, and have not scrupled to give it partly in his own Words.

singly

singly in themselves; and were admirable and extraordinary only for their Combination, and their Tendency through that surprizing Combination to such particular Ends.

For Example, when (as the * Psalmist expresses it) the Lord turned again the Captivity of Sion, then were they like unto them that dream; then was their Mouth filled with Laughter and their Tongue with Joy; then said they among the Heathen, GOD hath done great things for us.

NOW if we could exactly recount all the particular Means which did concur to the Surprizal of Babylon by Cyrus, and consequently to Cyrus's setting the Jews at Liberty, it's reasonable to believe we should not find one directly miraculous Effect amongst them all.

AND yet again, if we consider all the Circumstances and Concurrences of second Causes which Herodotus and Xenophon relate, and compare them with the sacred Predictions concerning Cyrus's good Success against Babylon, we should be forc'd to own that the exact Correspondence of those ordinary Events to that great End was as apparently and really God's own Work (and accordingly the Jews confess'd it) as if the same End had been effected by Means properly and directly miraculous.

FROM what has been here observ'd then we may be able to collect one distinctive Mark whereby to judge when any Work or Event may be so appropriated to God as to be said in a peculiar manner to be his Doing, and yet not directly miraculous, viz.

WHEN there is an extraordinary Combination of Events, usual and ordinary if singly consider'd, to

* Psalm CXXVI.

some great End, and hereby such a Success as vastly exceeded all Hopes and Expectations that could reasonably be built upon the *Posture of Things*, and the *natural Influence of second Causes*.

WHEN also these Events are in Matters of *great Moment*, and such as we may have just reason to believe that GOD would be most especially concern'd for, such as tend in any *eminent manner* to promote his *Glory*, and *advance his Kingdom* in the World.

WHEN lastly such Events happily *surprize* Men in a most *seasonable and critical Moment*, when the Hopes of all such Good and Happiness as arrives was upon the very point of turning, and giving place to Inactivity and Despair.]

THESE are some of the Marks and Characters by which with most Safety and least Presumption we may hope to distinguish God's *extraordinary Interpositions* from the *more common Operations* of his PROVIDENCE, without pretending to see *Miracles*, which according to the common Doctrine of the *Protestant and Reformed Churches* have long since ceased.

IT is also the general Opinion that these *remarkable Providences* of GOD are more common a great deal with respect to whole *Communities and Societies of Men* than such as regard only *particular Persons*.

AND indeed some of our most celebrated Divines have carry'd this Point so far as to say the *Justice* of GOD *obliges* him so to act; *i. e.* to dispense temporal Felicity and Calamities *proportionate* to the publick Conduct of Communities, because there will be no publick Societies in the other State, and consequently no future Retribution to them.

BUT

BUT whether this be maintainable in *this Height* or no, since every *particular Member* of publick Communities will be suitably and exactly rewarded or punish'd for *all* their Actions; and therefore for those among the rest which *concern'd the Publick* according to the Share and Proportion they had severally in such Transactions. However, I say, this may be as to a necessity of such Divine Providences and Judgments to Nations in such an exact Proportion as some of our Divines have speciously pleaded for, yet we can make no reasonable doubt at least but that GOD has shewn in *all Ages*, and that he still continues, at times and upon Occasions his *Wisdom* sees meet, to shew to *particular Men*, and *especially Nations and publick Bodies of Men*, eminent and signal Marks either of his *Favour* or of his *Anger*, by *extraordinary and special Providences*.

THE *Prosperity of publick Bodies* of Men who have a more eminent Regard to Virtue and Piety, as also the *Infelicity* of those who have little regard thereto, may *in the main* be easily accounted for, in the *ordinary Course of things* from the *natural Tendency* of Virtue and of Vice, to produce publick Happiness and Peace, or to create Disorders and Confusion; yet there are *certain Providences* at times discernible, which cannot be thus accounted for, nor without admitting God's more *extraordinary Interposition*, all which being admitted nevertheless will not infer so surely as some have thought, that all *Communities and publick Bodies* of Men must constantly and of necessity be punished, or rewarded, with exact proportion to their Conduct, in *this World*.

THE

THE whole Church is represented in the Book of the * Revelations as singing this Song. *Great and marvellous are thy Works, Lord God Almighty, just and true are thy Ways, thou King of Saints; who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify thy Name? for thou only art Holy. For all Nations shall come and worship before Thee, for thy Judgments are made manifest.*

THIS plainly refers not to things past in former Ages before Christ, but to the Christian, and latter Era of the Church. It may relate to and include amongst the rest of God's Judgments and Operations those *miraculous Providences* which were very frequent at the first spreading of the Christian Faith, but as these lasted not long, it is reasonable to understand it chiefly of remarkable Providences of the *other sort*, which are here made an Argument we see and ground for Mens *worshipping* GOD, and we are instructed in the Christian Duty of acknowledging in them the *Divine Perfections* and *glorious Attributes*.

ADMITTING therefore that we have no reason in these Days to look for *Miracles*, and also that Dispensations of Divine Providence *Special and Extraordinary* are not so frequent now as in some former Ages they may have been, yet have we sufficient grounds of believing that *God does still exert such Providences*, and it is certainly our Duty to take notice of them when such Judgments are executed, and to *acknowledge* GOD in them.

EXAMPLES hereof, whether relating to *publick Societies* or to *single Persons*, may be found without

* Cap. xv. v. 3, 4.

difficulty in *all Histories* of the best Account and Credit; and there are many remarkable ones to be met with, not only throughout the Body of Sir *Walter Raleigh's History of the World*, but purposely collected by him in his excellent Preface to that Book.

As to the certainty of the *Instances alledg'd* to this Purpose being really what they are presum'd and alledg'd for, or the *Probability* in *some*, more than in *others*, Men must use their own serious and best Judgment; neither is it necessary always to have an equal opinion of their Evidence with that which the most approved Authors shew themselves to have embrac'd.

BUT to deny *all* such Accounts, or even all those of *Heathen Writers indiscriminately* where they have express'd their *own Observations* or the *common Fame* and Sentiment of *Special Interpositions of Heaven*, this would be a thing very unreasonable; and whoever is so much a *Sceptick* in *this Point* can give but little Faith to History, I think, in *any other*, and consequently can receive but little or no Benefit from History.

WE our selves may have discerned perhaps *some Providences* wherein GOD has *made himself known by the Judgment which He executed*, that it was plainly *his Doing*, and seem'd to point at the particular Occasion of his *Interposing* after so remarkable a Manner; neither need we to be afraid of making such *Applications*,
 " where the Connexion between such Events and the
 " Cause to which we refer it is really plain and clear,
 " and not at all owing to our *Fancies*, or to the Pre-
 " possessions and Prejudices we are under from our
 " *Passions*."

“ Passions.” Or, if we cannot perhaps be confident that we our selves have *beheld with our Eyes* any such remarkable Providences and *signal Interposals of Divine Power*, yet certainly we have *heard with our Ears*, and our *Fathers* have declared, and transmitted down to us the *noble Works* of this Kind that GOD did in *their Days*, and in the *old time before them*.

NOW as Men would not be so prone to doubt, if all these things were duly consider'd by them, whether or no there was at all a DIVINE PROVIDENCE, so neither would they ask in such a *querulous manner*, with such *Distrust* and *Uneasiness* as sometimes they do, Why these remarkable Dispensations of Providence are not more *frequent*? Why great Sinners are not *constantly* punish'd and overtaken by the avenging Hand of Heaven in a visible manner, and good Men as *signally* prosper'd?

ESPECIALLY if they will also consider with me such *other Arguments* as I am further to urge now in Assertion of GOD'S PROVIDENCE over Men in *that Branch* of it which concerns their PRINCIPAL AND MOST IMPORTANT INTERESTS.



C H A P. III.

*Of GOD's Providence and Goodness in
giving Men a Law.*

NOW as there is thus a general Suitableness of outward Things in their ordinary Course to the common Wants of Mankind, so there is also a PROPER and SUITABLE Provision for Men in regard to their Minds and most important Interests. And although the Knowledge of GOD's Will be more clearly and in greater measure vouchsafed to some than to others, neither are the Divine Aids equal to all Men; yet there are such Provisions for all in both these Respects, as witness GOD's Goodness, and will render every one inexcusable who does not correspond to that Goodness, and obey the Law which was given him. They who neither had the Law of Moses, nor any other Law founded in and obliging them by Virtue of a Divine special Revelation, yet were not without a Divine Law; they had one written on their Hearts, which is the Law that I shall here principally consider, and yet not without a Regard also had to the Re-impression of it upon our Hearts (together with some Things super-added) by the Christian Revelation. And here I will first premise a Passage or two of JUSTIN MARTYR from his Dialogue with Trypho the Jew, which may serve at once to shew that I am not singular, or without Authority in speaking of the Divine Law in such a large

H

Extent,

Extent, and also to give a good *general Notion* of it in this extensive Sense I am about to consider it in.

HE says then, * It is a very absurd Conceit for Men to imagine that GOD would not at all times have all Mankind to practise the same Things perpetually and immutably right and good—that the insinuating such Things is to cast very dishonourable Imputations upon GOD, as if He did not teach *all* Men to *know* and to *do* what is right and just. For, says he, He does propound every where to the whole Race of Mankind a certain universal and immutable Righteousness, and all Men every where do know that *Adultery*, that *Fornication*, that *Murder*, and such other Things are certainly evil. And even tho' they should commit these Crimes, yet would they not be ignorant that they did wrong in so doing, unless it were such Men as being fill'd with the *impure Spirit*, and corrupted by a *wicked Education*, and long *Habits of Vice*, had lost and defaced their *natural Notices* of good and evil.

* "Αἰσῶπον ὅτι νόημα τὸν Θεὸν τὰ αὐτὰ δίκαια μὴ αἰεὶ πᾶν γένῳ ἀνθρώπων βεβλήσθαι περὶ τῆν. p. 280. 'Εἰ μὴ τὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ συκοφαντησῆσαι ὁ Θεὸς ὥς — μὴ τὰ αὐτὰ δίκαια πάντας διδάσκων καὶ εἰδέναι καὶ περὶ τῆν. p. 68. 280. posttr. Ed. Jebb. Id. p. 281. Τὰ γὰρ αἰεὶ καὶ δι' ὅλες δίκαια καὶ πᾶσαν δικαιοσύνην παρέχει ἐν παντὶ γένει ἀνθρώπων. καὶ ὅτι πᾶν γένῳ γνωρίζον ὅτι μοιχεία κακὸν καὶ περνεία, καὶ ἀνδροφονεΐα καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τοιαῦτα. καὶ πᾶντες περὶ τῶν αὐτὰ ἀλλ' ἐν γε τῷ ἐπίστασθαι ἀδικεῖν ὅταν περὶ τῶν αὐτὰ ἐκ ἀπληλαγμένοι εἰσὶ, πλὴν ὅσοι ὑπὸ ἀγαθὰς πνεύματι ἐμπεφορημένοι, καὶ ὑπὸ φάουλῃς ἀνατροπῆς καὶ ἐθῶν φάουλων καὶ νόμων πονηρῶν διαφθαρέντες τὰς φυσικὰς ἐννοίας ἀπώλεσαν, μάλλον δὲ ἔσβεσαν ἢ ἐπεχήμενας ἔχουσιν. ἰδεῖν γὰρ ἐστὶ καὶ

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evil. For it is ordinary to see Men, who would not be willing that others should do to them as they do to others, still reproach other Men for the very things which themselves do, and for which it hence appears their own Consciences must reproach and sting them.

MORAL Agents if they be *govern'd suitably* must be *govern'd morally*, and not *physically*. This is the *properest*, if not the *only strict* Notion of GOVERNING; for *inanimate* and *irrational Beings*, although they may by a *Figure* (used above) be said to *fulfil a Law of their Maker*, yet must be said to be *impelled* or *acted*, to be *physically dispos'd* or *determin'd*, rather than in strictness to *yield Obedience*, or to be *govern'd*.

AND still there are those, not only whose Schemes break in upon the *Suitableness* and *Propriety* of GOD's governing *moral Agents*, but who deny that Men have a *Rule of distinguishing good and evil*, that GOD hath shewed Man *what is right and good*, and *what the contrary*.

AND others, who allow, and contend for it, that GOD has given Man a *Law*, yet cast the most dishonourable Imputations upon Him by affirming, that Men are *absolutely and utterly unable to obey the Law which GOD hath given them*, or by insinuating such Things concerning God's Procedure with Man in regard to this *Law* as naturally give us the Idea of cruel Rigour rather than of Goodness or Justice.

καὶ τὰς μὴ τὰ αὐτὰ παθεῖν βελομένους, ἅπερ αὐτοὶ τὰς ἄλλας διαπράττει, καὶ ἐν συνιδέσειν ἐχθραῖς τὰυτὰ ἐνιδίζοντας ἀλλήλους ἅπερ ἐργάζονται.

INTO which *wide Field* of Matter therefore let us enter, and proceed with as much *Brevity* as may be consistent with the *Nature* and *Importance* of the Subject.

THE *Author of Nature* has not only wrought an admirable Beauty into *all his Works*, but He has so constituted *Man's Nature* as that he should be capable (*i. e.* with his Pains and diligent Endeavours) to see, to delight, and improve himself in seeing, these *Traces* and *Footsteps* of *Eternal Wisdom, Power* and *Goodness*. * For the Mind contemplating the Works of Nature collects from thence the Knowledge of their *Author*, from whence arises *Piety, Justice* and the whole *Chorus of Virtues*, which render human Life happy and *resembling the Divine Excellence and Felicity*.

WE may see by the *visible things* of GOD that he dispenses to all Beings *things proper* and *suitable* to them. This ought to inspire us with an ardent Desire of *resembling him*, so far as we may, by comporting our selves towards all our *Fellow-creatures* in a manner *suitable* to their *Nature* and *Circumstances*, and to the *Relation* that we bear to them. *God* being *just*,

* Cicero de N. D. p. 247. Edit. Dav. Quæ (sc. cursus astrorum, &c.) contuens Animus accipit ab his cognitionem Deorum, ex quâ oritur Pietas, cui conjuncta Justitia est, reliquæque virtutes, è quibus vita beata existit, par & similis Deorum.

Item Tuscul. i. p. 61. Ut Deum agnosceis ex operibus ejus sic ex memoriâ rerum & inventione & celeritate motûs omnique pulchritudine Virtutis vim Divinam Mentis agnoscito.

Hierocles Γνωσας τὰ ὅληα ὡς παρ' αὐτοῦ τῆ Θεοῦ ἰδέσθαι ὁμοιωμα θεῶν κηρύσσει. Vid. Comment. in Aur. Carm. Pyth. p. 242.

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it is natural to rational Beings uncorrupted and preserving Virtue, as *Shadows* of the Divine Nature and Excellence to give to every one that which is *suitable* to their *Nature, Place, and Merit*.

GOD has put Man in a capacity to *know*, to *resemble* and to *enjoy him*. He has given him in the *Providence of his Goodness* a *RULE* for the Direction of his Actions, and that not a *Rule* which he is at liberty to regard or overlook at his Pleasure, but such as is a *LAW* to him, the Transgression of which will carry with it the worst of Consequences, and an obedience to it assured Happiness.

“ THERE are certain *Principles of Good and Evil*,
“ says Archbishop SHARP, which God has stamp’d
“ upon the Minds of all Men in the very Constitu-
“ tion of their Natures, there are some things mani-
“ festly and immutably good in themselves, as to wor-
“ ship God, e. g. to honour our Parents, to keep our
“ Faith, and perform our Promises and Covenants.

“ THE *Principles of the Law of Nature* says GRO-
“ TIUS are, if we do but rightly apply our Minds
“ and with due attention, *Self-evident*, and appear as
“ plainly as the *Objects of our Senses*.

“ THE Mind which is the Spectator of other
“ Minds cannot be without its *Eye* so as to discern
“ *Proportion*, it finds the *Agreeable* or *Disagreeable*,
“ a *foul* and a *fair* as really and truly here, as in the
“ outward Forms and Representations of *sensible things*.”

Thus the late Lord SHAFTSBURY, and I add that the Mind perceives this equally and for the same reason in a Man’s *own past Actions*, or in the *Ideas of a fu-
ture*

ture Conduct of his own, as it does in the Behaviour of another Person, and therefore determines it self to that which is right and good, or immediately feels a self-condemning Pain and Disorder within it self if it determine otherwise.

NOTHING has been oft'ner said than these Things, inso much that let a Man endeavour concisely to express it in whatever Form of Words he pleases, I believe it will not be difficult to shew him very nearly his own Words said oftentimes by others before him; and what has been so often said, has been receiv'd and assented to by Mankind in general (if we except some few Persons of an unhappy Turn of Head) as a Notion their Minds have long, and as it were naturally and intimately been * acquainted with.

WE should by no means refer the Distinction of Good and Evil to the mere arbitrary Will of God, since the Divine Will ever determines it self in Conformity to the immutable Rules of Justice, Goodness and Truth.

* Pythag. Aur. Carm.

Ἄλλα σὺ δάσῃς ἐπὶ δῖον γένος ὅτι βροτοῖσιν
οἷς ἡμεῖς περφέρομεν φύσις δεικνυσὶν ἔχουσα.

By which the oft-named Platonic Commentator upon these Verses says is meant the common Notices which the Creator had made connatural to the Rational Soul that it may know him: αἷς ΠΡΟΣΕΦΥΤΣΕΝ ὁ δημιουργὸς τῷ λογικῷ γένει πρὸς ὁμῶς γινώσιν ἑαυτῶ.

Vide Ciceronem ubique.

Inesse Homini a Naturâ Scientiam recti & honesti communis Veterum sententia est, says Vossius, Hist. Pelag. p. 369, & seq. where he cites St. Basil, G. Nazianzen, Chrysostom, Jerome, &c.

But

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But still we ought never, even when we argue upon the Foot of natural Reason, to *abstract* the consideration of the WILL OF GOD, which, to use the Word in its most ordinary Acceptation, must be understood most *immediately* and *directly* to induce our OBLIGATION in all the Instances where the natural Beauty of good Actions strike us in the liveliest and most affecting manner.

I CONCEIVE there could not be discern'd (what I am endeavouring now to prove there is) a LAW of God for the regulating human Actions, if we should *abstract all consideration* of GOD, his WILL, and even his EXISTENCE, which it is extremely wrong to do; neither can there be seen a *natural Fitness or Proportion of Things*, which certainly there is, without it's appearing to be GOD'S WILL that Men should conduct themselves by *such Rules*.

AND therefore, since I cannot in this part commend, I would however blame rather the perplex'd and unintelligible *manner of Expression* than the *Sentiment* of the excellent GROTIUS, who is in the main a very *clear* as well as *singularly learned and judicious Writer*, and to whom the World is more oblig'd perhaps than to *any other Person* to whom it does not owe Writings that were endited under the direct and peculiar guidance of GOD'S Spirit, and by his immediate *Inspiration*.

THE Passage I mean is in his *Prolegomena* to his Book *de Jur. Bel. & Pacis*.

HÆC quidem quæ jam diximus (i. e. de JURE NATURÆ & Principiis homini internis quibus justa ab injustis secernat) locum aliquem haberent, etiamsi

atiamſi daverimus, quod ſine ſummo ſcelere dari nequit, non eſſe DEUM, aut non curari ab eo negotia humana.

COULD the pious and excellent GROTIUS mean, what the words ſeem to import, that there could be any *Law of Nature*, any ſuch *Principles of Morality* if there were indeed no God? No certainly; for he acknowledges in the following Sentence that this *very Law of Nature*, flowing from theſe internal Principles, is to be aſcribed to GOD from *whoſe WILL it ariſes that ſuch Principles ſhould exiſt in us*: which juſtifies my cenſuring the Expreſſion rather than blaming the Sentiment.

I FIND a learned * *Perſon* citing this Paſſage from GROTIUS and ſoft'ning it after this manner.

GROTIUS, ſays he, has judiciously remark'd that there would be a natural Obligation even if we ſhould allow (what cannot be) *that there was no GOD, or making an Abſtraction of his Exiſtence for a Moment*. But to what end and purpoſe ſhould we make ſuch an Abſtraction even for a Moment?

IT is unneceſſary, it is unnatural and of ill conſequence to make this Abſtraction; for as there certainly could not be any ſuch *Principles* whereof we are ſpeaking, nor the *Subjects* wherein they do ſubſiſt, if there were indeed no GOD; ſo it ſeems alſo that they cannot have *all the Efficacy* towards exciting Men to Good and reſtraining them from Evil, which they are

* *Monſieur Leibnitz in his Reflection on Puffendorf's Offic. Hom. & Civis.*

apt, and are design'd by GOD to have, so long as Men shall abstract the Consideration of GOD's *Being*, or of his *Will* that they should act agreeably to these Principles.

IT is good to remember, that we should make use of *all* the Arguments we can, and unite *all* the Motives that may be, to keep us steady in the Way wherein we ought to walk. If when we are struck with the *natural Beauties* of Virtue, we add to this Incentive the consideration of the *Divine Will*, GOD's *Authority and Appointment*; if when we are led upon any occasion *first and more directly* into the consideration of GOD's *Authority and Commands*, we join therewith a due Reflection upon the *intrinsic Loveliness* of things that are good and just, we shall consult by this Method the Interests of Virtue, and our Establishment therein, in the *best and fullest* manner; and by this management in *conjoining several Motives*, we may be not only more *secure* in the ordinary Instances, but also rise to *sublimier Degrees* of Virtue, and to a much *greater Perfection*, than otherwise we could have been able to have done.

IT was a *just thought*, and put into a fine Light, by a late *ingenious and celebrated* * *Author*, that Men might live much in a little time, by *crowding* as it were every Action with *several* good Views and Aims in it; by *accumulating* all the good Principles that could possibly be collected into, or concern'd in it.

IT will be our Wisdom, therefore to take the Advantage of a Method which will *best secure*, and *most exalt* our Virtue; and it cannot but be look'd upon

* Mr. ADDISON.

as a manifest Argument of GOD's *Providence* and *Goodness*, that so *many* and *great Inducements* are suggested to us of doing things that are excellent ; and thereby growing into his *Likeness*, and recommending our selves to his *Favor*.

IT may be thought perhaps that another great Name besides GROTIUS's may be concern'd in the Remark I have made above, because we may read in TULLY's third Book *de Nat. D.* in incidental Assertion by way of vindicating the Liberty there taken, to this Effect.

* THAT there is no Encouragement given to wicked Actions by what had been before argu'd against *Divine Providence*, since the Conscience of Good and Evil, and the difference perceivable from the Nature of things betwixt Virtue and Vice, ought and was sufficient to restrain Men from the latter.

BUT whatever Objection may lye against these Expressions, or however wrong the Sentiment may be, still CICERO may be easily defended in this part, because he is here *personating another Man*, and puts these words into *Cotta's Mouth*, whose whole Disputation against *Divine Providence*, as he declares : the End of the Book, he takes to be *neither true nor probable* ; and he also makes *Cotta* say, that he argued only by *way of Disputation*, and knew that his Antagonist could re-

* *Invita in hoc loco versatur Oratio ; videtur enim auctoritatem adferre peccandi. Atque recte videretur nisi & Virtutis & Vitiorum sine ullâ Divinâ ratione grave ipsâ Conscientia pondus esset. In my Book of Davies Edition it is ipsius conscientiæ, where since the learned Editor intimates an Error in the Text as to the Case, and offers an Emendation, falling in with his suspicion of an Error, I have indulg'd my Conjecture in representing the Case which I think the whole Construction does plainly require.*

fute

fute him; and when CICERO speaks in *his own Person* we find him intimating the contrary to what he had so advanc'd under Cotta's Name, to be his *own real and true Sentiment*, viz. *That take away Piety and all consideration of the supreme Being, Faith and Justice, and human Society will of Course be destroyed.*

QUIBUS, i. e. *Sanctitate & Religione, sublati perturbatio vite sequitur, & magna confusio. Atque haud scio an, Pietate adversus Deos sublata, fides etiam, & Societas humani generis, & una excellentissima Virtus Justitia tollatur.*

IF any shall say that this is express'd in a very languid manner, as if he were not certainly fix'd in the matter, whether it were thus or otherwise, a remembering his *Seet* and the *Character* of it, which was to shew an overstrained and affected Modesty to avoid the *Appearance of Dogmatizing*, will solve this Difficulty.

WE ought never therefore to abstract the Consideration of the WILL OF GOD, but regard it conjointly with the Reason of things. Now God has shewed Man what is good, what his *Will* is.

WE may certainly collect from the *original Constitution of our Natures*; from that calm but noble *Pleasure* that fills the Mind upon the Reflection of *good Actions* and *rational Conduct*; from the *Pain* it endures when it has *forsook* the Guidance of Reason; from the *Faculties* GOD has given us, and the *Objects* he has suited to them; from the *Utility* that ordinarily attends a reasonable and virtuous Behavior, and that ought to be expected in futurity where in extraordinary Cases it is not discern'd at present; from the *At-*

tributes and Perfections of GOD which may be known by the visible things which he has created, and his Method of governing them; from all these we may collect that to practise Piety and moral Virtues, and to conform thus our Actions to the Nature and Reason of Things is the WILL OF GOD and the LAW OF OUR NATURE.

AND accordingly we find the *common Principles of Morality* to have been known, asserted and recommended, and set in a great variety of good Lights, by Men separated by immense Distances of time and place. Men inhabiting *different Zones and Worlds*; not only *Europeans* and others of the *politer People* of the World, but those of the *new discover'd World*, both *learned Greeks* and the most *untravell'd and unvisited Barbarians* have acknowledged these *common Principles* for their *Law and Rule of Action*, as to instance briefly in that *Golden Rule of Equity*

TO DO TO OTHERS AS WE WOULD DESIRE THEY SHOULD DO UNTO US.

WAS it out of Veneration to some *Great Name*, a *PYTHAGORAS*, a *SOCRATES*, or a *PLATO*, that so many of the *wiser Gentiles* express'd their Approbation of, and so often recommended, in Monuments that still remain, this noble and generous Sentiment? No. It was *Natural Reason* that shew'd it them in such a *full Light* that they could not but confess its real *Excellence and Justness*.

FOR could the mere Authority of some Great Philosopher have recommended it to a *polite Isocrates*, to a *Seneca* himself a Philosopher, to a *Roman Emperour*

as

as *Alexander Severus*, who order'd it as we are told to be inscrib'd upon his *Palace*; could any Man's Name and Reputation be suppos'd to give it a *Vogue* and *Currency* without any *intrinsic Reason* through *Learned Nations*, which had great Intercourse with one another, and mutually communicated *Notions* as well as *Merchandizes*; if all this were to be conceded, still we may trace this Principle into *vastly distant Regions*, where the Names of the most *celebrated Philosophers* of *Egypt* or of *Chaldee*, of *Greece* or *Rome* had never reach'd.

FOR in the *Eastern* Parts of the World amongst the antient *Chineses*, a very remote and out-of-the-way People, we find by the most authentic Information that can be of their History, and Morals, that this *Rule*, and the Substance of it apply'd in numerous particular Instances, makes up a principal part of their *Morality*, as will easily appear to any that looks into *Confucius*, who is suppos'd to have liv'd several hundred Years before the *Christian Era* commenc'd.

AND as for the *distant Western World* I take leave to borrow my Argument and Instance from an * *Author* who has wrote excellently upon *this*, and *other Moral and Religious* Subjects, and who refers us to Sir *William Temple's* Authority for the Passage I am going to transcribe.

“ WE are told, says he, that the first Founders of
“ the Empire of the *Inca's* in *Peru*, (which the Tra-
“ dition of that People represents as an Empire of *vast*

* Mr. JOHN EVANS.

“ *Antiquity*)

“ *Antiquity*) taught this as one of their *first Rules*, and
 “ indeed upon a very clear and cogent Reason, *that*
 “ *Men should neither say nor do any Thing to others,*
 “ *that they were not willing others should say or do to them,*
 “ because it was against all Reason to make one Law
 “ for ourselves, and another for other People.

THIS Reflection might be more copiously pursu’d
 in *this Instance*, and the same Thing easily exemplify’d
 in regard to *other Heads* or general Principles of Mora-
 lity.

“ NOW all those Principles of this Sort put toge-
 “ ther, is that which we call the *Law of Nature*, and
 “ the only Rule of Conduct that Mankind had be-
 “ fore GOD was pleas’d to discover his Will by more
 “ *particular Revelation.*” And this is that Law which
 St. Paul speaks of, when He says, that the *Gentiles*
 who had not the Law of *Moses*, yet had a *Law writ-*
ten in their Hearts, by their acting contrary to which,
 or according to it, their Consciences did bear witness to
 them, and did either *accuse* or *excuse* them.

So that we are to understand by the *Law of Nature*,
 not only the *prime Heads* and most general *Dictates* of
 it, but we must take in also all the *necessary Deductions*
 from those Heads. For it is the Privilege of our *rati-*
onal Nature to *make Inferences*, to *transfer Likenesses*, as
 CICERO expresses it, to compare present Things with
 those which are not present, to make Applications of
general Rules and *Precepts* to all the *particular Cases* that
 may occur.

WE may sometimes have as great *certainty* of things
 by *Collection* and *Inference* as of *first Principles* themselves;
 and

DIVINE PROVIDENCE. 63

and indeed our Distinction from other Animals, our *Rationality* does in a great measure consist in our *discursive Power*; and whatever Truths we have *certainty* of this or any other way, we are truly *in the result taught it of GOD*.

IF all were *serious Enquirers* after Truth, and *Lovers of Virtue*, there would not be even in the *smaller Branches* and Deductions from those main Principles we have been speaking of so great and frequent a Discordance as has in some Instances been observ'd, and which some Men are so mightily pleas'd to *observe*, and to *proclaim*, and *magnify*.

WE know that *human Laws* concerning *civil Rights* and *Properties*, the very plainest that are or can be made, in *these Cases* become *mighty obscure*. There will happen frequent *Mis-interpretations* of the *plainest Laws*, *civil* as well as *moral* and *divine*, when Men's Lusts and strong Passions intervene. A *violent Man* will always imagine and assert the Law to be on his Side, tho' at the same Time, all Persons who are *free from Prejudices*, all equitable calm and prudent Men, may very well know the *true Sense* of such Law, and agree in thinking it very *plain* and *clear*.

NOT but that I readily acknowledge, that in long Deductions there is proportionably *room* for and *Liableness* to *Errors*, through the *Imbecillity of human Intellect*.

BUT such is our Happiness, such is *GOD's Justice* and *Goodness*, that the *great Principles of Morality* are very plain to be discern'd, *he that runs may read them*. And Men who do not want the use of Reason (or have not in great measure cast it away) cannot *mis-
take*

stake in them or *overlook* them without *wilful Obstinacy* in so doing, and being *self-condemn'd* in it. And if they shall *otherwise* mistake in making a long train of Deductions from them, and in the Application of them to some *intricate uncommon Cases*, the *All-seeing GOD*, the *Searcher of Hearts* knows whether *any*, or *what Degree* of *Negligence*, *Prejudice*, or *other Fault*, was mixed with and contributed to that *Error*; or whether it were the *Effect* of *invincible* and *unculpable Ignorance*, and will accordingly either *impute* or *excuse* them. And the same will hold in relation to long Deductions from *Reveal'd Principles*, and obscure *perplexed Cases* that *Christians* as such may be concern'd in.

GOD is not a hard Master to require impossible Things of us; He will vindicate his despis'd Authority in the Punishment of those that have *really disobey'd his Laws*, but we may assure our selves, He will not exert his Severity and Anger against those who have done their best and utmost both to *know* and to *obey* them, but that He will receive them to his *Favor* in Degrees and Measure such as *infinite Wisdom* will *proportion* to their *Conduct*.

CONCLUDE we then that GOD has most certainly given all Men a *Rule* to direct them, a *LAW* by forming their *Conduct* agreeably to which they may find great *present Satisfaction*, and conceive a well-grounded Hope of abundantly greater *Pleasure*, *Reward*, and *Happiness hereafter*.

CHAP. IV.

*Of the Possibility of obeying the divine Law,
and of the Equity and Goodness of GOD's
Procedure with Men in Reference there-
to.*

BUT we are not so soon in Port, if I may use such an Allusion; our Labour here returns upon us, we are forc'd out again into the wide Main of Controversy, and yet, I hope we shall get through it without Shipwreck either of Truth or Charity.

AND therefore suitably to the antient Rule of * Mariners, let us have our *Hand upon the Helm, and our Eyes upon Heaven!* Let us use our Diligence and all our best Endeavors, void of Passions and Prejudices! And whilst we do so, may Heaven direct us! And may its kind Breath, piously implor'd, fan our Sails, and carry us into the calm and peaceful Haven of Truth--Truth and Knowledge join'd with suitable Practice, Obedience and Holiness, the Emblem and the Pledge of the hop'd-for Haven of eternal perfect Knowledge, Peace, Felicity and Glory!

FOR I premise this, that I am not going to assert the Possibility of obeying GOD's Commandments *without his Assistance.*

* Oculus ad Cœlum, Manus ad Clavum.

AND again, I shall not offer to say with *Pelagius* or *Celestius* of old, or with a *modern Author* who out-goes them, that *there is nothing at all in the Regenerate to be condemn'd, their Passions, their Anger is pure Goodness, pure Justice, pure Charity* — that *their Hearts being become the Temples and Thrones of the Holy Ghost they continually keep the Commandments of GOD perfectly without failing in any of them.*

SHALL we say with these Men, that the Regenerate when they pray to God and say, *Forgive us our Trespases*, do either pray for *others* excepting themselves; or that if they do make this Petition for themselves, it is only to ask Pardon that they have sinn'd formerly, (many Years ago perhaps) in their Darkness and Enmity?

THE * *modern Author*, whose Sentiments and Words too mostly I here represent, is apprehensive it will be said that this is the Heresy of the *Enthusiasts* and *Perfectionists*, and that he is very fond of it. *Amen! says he, O lovely Heresy! make me, O God, one of these Hereticks! for thou canst; I believe it. Be it unto me, O Lord, according to my Faith!*

THUS he adds one *Point of Pelagianism* to his own *Enthusiasm*, and is even *more Pelagian than Pelagius himself*

* It is Mr. PETER POIRET who was a Person of a very peculiar and odd Character. He had a warmer Fancy, and wrote with more Fire than did always well consist with a happy and solid Judgment; and the Truth is, he was a great Enthusiast; which makes it necessary to read his Works with particular Care, and examine all his Notions well before they be admitted as right and just;

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himself in it, although he tells us in another Place, and speaking of another Point, viz. *God's Operation in the Soul of Man*, "that Heaven is not further from Hell than his Sentiments are from the *devilish* Doctrine, the *abominable* Heresy, the *Atheism* of Pelagius, which he so infinitely abhors, that he had rather be in Hell without it than with it in *Paradise*."

FAR be it from us to assert any thing that is so remote from *Truth* and from all *Humility*, as what is above express'd!

SHALL we on the other Hand say, *that it is impossible for Men to obey the Law and Commands which God has requir'd them to obey under Pain of his great and terrible Displeasure?* See then the Consequences! Thus we accuse GOD either of *Ignorance* of our Abilities and Natures; or we ascribe *Injustice* and *Cruelty* to the *most just and the best* of all Beings, and by saying, that he has commanded us things impossible to be perform'd, and that he damns Men for Non-performance of them, we say in effect that he is *cruel* and *not merciful*, that he aim'd rather at our *Punishment* and *Misery* than our *Obedience* or *Salvation*.

IF the *Terms* that are offer'd to Man since the Fall are not such as are agreeable to him in his *present Condition* and *Feasible*; if they were form'd upon consideration of Abilities at first given, but *which are no longer*, these *Terms* could not in this Case be said to be

just; but yet, with all his Faults, his enthusiastic Reveries and Dotages, Mr. Poirer may deserve to have it said of him--ubi bene nemo melius--he could put Truths in the best and strongest Light; as well as give all the Advantages to fantastic Notions, they were capable of receiving.

gracious and relieving, but would only serve to upbraid and reproach Man with his Inability.

AND therefore since we must by no Means ascribe to GOD a Procedure which favours of Cruelty and Mockery rather than of Goodness and Benignity, it is necessary to assert,

THAT MEN HAVE ABILITY TO KEEP THE LAW WHICH GOD HAS GIVEN THEM.

IT can signify little towards invalidating what has here been urg'd to say that it is the Argument, and in part the very words of *Pelagius*, who was a notorious Heretick,

ALL that *Pelagius* wrote was not *Herefy*; but he has said some things tolerably well, it may be suppos'd, since a * Piece of his writing has pass'd currently for many Ages, (as learned Men allow and assure us) for the work of St. *Jerom*. I mean the Epistle to *Demetrias*, beginning with these Words, [*Si summo ingenio*] which *Vossius* asserts and proves to be *Pelagius's*, and says that both *Bellarmin* and *Baronius* have confess'd the same. By this Means it has come to be made use of, and approv'd by Men, who would in all probability,

* *Vossius* in Hist. Pel. p. 25. *Pelagii* illa Epistola ad *Demetriadem* quæ incipit *Si summo ingenio* inter *Hieronymiana* dolo malo locum reperit, unde eam ut genuinum *Hieronymi* factum pro libero arbitrio testem laudat *Tallipiedus*.—Non esse aliud quam *Pelagii* fatentur *Marianus Victorius*, *Robertus Bellarminus* & *Caspar Baronius* fragmentis convicti quæ exinde tanquam ex ipsius *Pelagii* ad *Demetriadem* literis citat *Augustinus*. Sed posteaquam ob exosum *Pelagii* nomen omitti illud in titulo cepit, errore facili *Hieronymi* credita fuit quem ad *Demetriadem* scripisse constabat.

had they known the real Author, have sooner committed it to the Flames than have commended it, and would have used their best Endeavours to have procured it the *same Fate*, as great Zeal thought due to the rest of his Works; which, had they been all preserv'd, might have been of excellent Use in those parts which were clear of his Errors, and for others, the ill Effects of them might have been guarded against by *detecting their Sophistry*, and opposing the *Truth* to them.

To justify in some Measure this my Notion of *Pelagius* and his Writings, I will produce an Observation of *two of our learned Divines*, which I thought was much to his *Honour*, as well as an Argument of *their Candor and Ingenuity*.

“ Dr. Wall judiciously remarks, says * Dr. Water-
“ land, that there wanted only the *Accuracy* of speak-
“ ing which *Pelagius* had us'd to clear and settle the
“ Dispute between the *Nestorians* and *Eutychians*.

THERE was so much Strength and Justness in *this Reasoning of Pelagius* upon which he grounded his Assertion that *it was possible to keep the Divine Law*, that the *Fathers* who were contemporary with him, and were his most vehement Opposers in other things, would not offer to contradict it, though many of the Moderns, following St. Bernard, have asserted that it is *impossible to obey God's Commands*, and have endeavoured with much *fruitless Labor* (as to me it seems) to reconcile this to the *Justice and Wisdom of GOD*, and to the *Goodness of his Providence*.

* See Critic. Hist. of Athan. Creed, p. 112.

ON the contrary, the most zealous Opposers of *Pelagius*, as *St. Jerom*, and *St. Austin*, considering that not only *Plato*, *Demosthenes*, *Plutarch*, and other Pagans, had always put it amongst the Conditions of a Law, that it should be *de re possibili*, that no one could be bound to *Impossibilities*, but that many *Christian Fathers* also taught the same, and that it took place with regard to GOD as well as in *human Laws*; they agree in asserting that the Divine Commands are possible to be kept, (making some such Distinction as we shall by and by) and *St. Austin*, not content with bare asserting this, says, that to hold that GOD has commanded Man any thing that is impossible, and to say that the Divine Commands may be fulfilled by all good Men, but not by each is blasphemous.

IN the Synods of *Carthage* and *Milevis*, that Opinion only was condemned which held it possible to keep God's Commandment *sine Adjutorio Gratia*, which shews that those Fathers were of the same Sentiment with the *Palestine Bishops*, who in a Synod, where *Pelagius* was present, allow'd his Assertion of the Possibility of keeping GOD's Commands, when he added that *this was possible by the Grace of God*.

THE learned *Vossius* must be my Voucher for what I have here said of the *Fathers* and *Councils*, who in his *Historia Pelagiana*, p. 484, 487, 488, 494, &c. refers to the respective Places of those *Fathers*. I had not the Opportunity of consulting them, neither did I think indeed there was any great Occasion to do it; for I believe no one has accus'd that great Man either of *Negligence* or of *Unfairness* in his Quotations.

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IT is necessary therefore to say that there is a *twofold Obedience*, and a *twofold Transgression of the Divine Commands*; that a Man may be a *Sinner*, a *Transgressor* of the Law in the most *strict* and *rigid Sense*, whilst yet he may justly be call'd a *Child of GOD*, an *obedient Son*, in *another* and less rigorous Sense, agreeably to the Judgment of those *PALESTINE BISHOPS* who assembled in a *Synod* on Purpose to settle this, and some other Points of near Alliance with it, and determin'd that every one ought to hold, as the *Catholic Church* they say ever held, *that those Persons may truly be call'd the Sons of God, who daily Pray and say with Truth—Forgive us our Trespases.*

THERE is a considerable Difference betwixt a Man's obeying the *Commands of GOD* to the *minute*st and *exact*est Point, so that one *Lot* or *Tit*le of it is not left unfulfill'd, and an *Obedience* that *endeavours* and *strives* continually to come up to the *exact Point*, and by that earnest Striving is ever tolerably and acceptably near it; and yet both the *one* and the *other* of these is call'd by the Name of *Obedience*.

THE *former* could not entitle us to the *Eternal Rewards* without respect to *CHRIST*, and the *Promises* that *GOD* has made to Men through *Him*; and whosoever imagines that the *latter* shall be only rewarded with *Hell* and *Damnation* because of its *Imperfection*, must certainly have very unworthy and strange Apprehensions of *GOD*, whose *Compassion* towards Men was so great, that He contriv'd a *Method* by which there should be a *Remission* even of Mens *greatest Sins* upon their *Repentance*, and
their

their new Obedience in Purenels and Sincerity of Heart.

THE Generality of Mankind did never *certainly* know that GOD would remit wilful and heinous Sins: All Men indeed not enlightened by the *Gospel* must be subject to Fear and Dread upon the Commission of *such Sins*, how well soever they might regulate their *After-conduct*. For though I suppose that both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, after the committing of *deadly Sins*, might comply with the Suggestions of *Natural Reason* or *Divine Grace* to repent and amend, and so might through *Christ* have their Sins *remitted*; yet as they were ignorant or uncertain of such Sins being remitted, (there being under the *Mosaic Dispensation* no Atonement appointed for *such Sins*, and the *Gentiles*, whatever dark confus'd Notions they might have of an Atonement, having no *Certainty* of it) all who had ever been guilty of *wilful deadly Sin*, had reason to tremble at the thoughts of Divine Judgment *however they had repented and amended*.

BUT it can never be made appear, that GOD was so *strict and rigorous* with Men under *any Dispensation* whatever, as not to accept their *sincere and best Endeavors to serve and please Him*, but to punish the *smallest Defects*, and Imperfections, that through human Frailty mix'd themselves with their Obedience, with *Eternal Torments*.

THERE may seem in the *Mosaic Dispensation* to be as great an *Appearance of Rigor* as in any, if not a greater. Besides their Obligations, in common with all the Race of Mankind, to do the things that are

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naturally good and just, they were enjoin'd many things *merely positive*, which sort of Injunctions were laid upon them, as JUSTIN MARTYR and others commonly observe, by reason of the Hardness of their Hearts. *This Law* as it was peculiar to them, and additional to the common Law of Nature, might have something approaching towards a Rigor and Severity in it; which is accounted for by that extraordinary *Perverseness* and *Obstinacy* of the People to whom it was adapted; as the Obstinacy of a Child often extorts from a good and kind Parent such a *Discipline*, as is proper to the *Case* and *Circumstances*, rather than agreeable to his own Temper.

THE *Law* therefore was given to *this People* in a manner suited to their peculiar Temper *i. e.* in a manner full of *Terror*, and proper to *strike an Awe* into them. The Threat'nings were *strong and general*, *curst is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the Book of the Law to do them.*

YET even under *this Law*, an Obedience though mix'd with *Imperfections* was accepted if *sincere*; and there were *ordinary Sacrifices* and *Atonements* prescrib'd for *such Defects*, for *involuntary and lesser Sins*.

THEY who liv'd under *this Oeconomy* knew and acknowledg'd, by a *Light common to them all*, that GOD would not be strict to punish such Offences as were the Effects of human Frailty or Ignorance; that with him there was Mercy that he might be feared. A DAVID (or another Prophet) might by a *common Sentiment* pray with Faith and Confidence for the Forgiveness of his *unknown* and all his Sins of *Ignorance* and *mere Frailty*, whilst a Confidence of his pre-

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sumptions

sumptuous and *deadly* Sins being forgiven might, notwithstanding he had bitterly repented of them, be owing to a *Degree* of Light and Revelation *not* common, or ordinarily vouchsafed to others under the same Dispensation.

IT is without any Foundation therefore that some *Divines* affect to speak in such a manner as could only be proper if *all Sins were equal*; as if every the *least Negligence* or *Inobedience* through *human Frailty* included an *impious Contempt* and *profess'd Rebellion* against GOD, as if GOD had prepar'd Hell and the extremest Torments that can be conceiv'd for *such Failures*, and every such Failure and Imperfection *amidst a Life of sincere Obedience* shall infallibly sink Men into that dreadful *Abyss*, unless (which is the Felicity of a *few special Favorites* of Heaven) the *whole Righteousness* of CHRIST both *Active* and *Passive* be apply'd to cover it from this incurred Wrath and Vengeance of GOD.

THESE are not Considerations *foreign* to our Subject, whilst we are endeavouring to represent the DIVINE LAW as a LAW given to Man in the GOODNESS OF GOD, and not for a *Snare*, and Means of surely exposing him to *eternal Misery*.

SOME have been *harsh* in their *Expressions* upon this Head, of the *Possibility of obeying God's Commands*, who yet have been far from attributing to the *best of Beings* any thing like *such a Procedure* with his Creatures, as I have been speaking of, and which is manifestly unworthy of his Goodness.

I WILL give a notable Instance of this in St. BERNARD, who says in express Terms, that *it is impossible*

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ble to obey the Divine Commands: “Nec latuit præ-
 “ceptorem præcepti pondus hominum vires excedere,
 “ergo *mandando impossibilia* non prævaricatores homi-
 “nes fecit sed humiles, p. 715.” with more to the
 same purpose in other Places, as p. 40. *Ed. vet.*

THESE are indeed very harsh and wrong Expres-
 sions, and yet (as I said in a former Case of GRO-
 TIUS so I may here of St. BERNARD that) his *Sen-
 timent* is not so much to be blam’d as his *Expression*.
 For he only means, that it is not possible for Men to
 be without some smaller Faults or Inobediences to the
 Divine Injunctions; and he is very large and frequent
 * in speaking of the *Equity* and *Goodness* of GOD in
 regard

* In Libro de Præcepto & Dispensatione c. 15.

Quasi vero & ipsa Evangelica præcepta non multum inter se dis-
 crepent & merito observationis & transgressionis periculo. Cæ-
 terum sicut non omnia unius esse constat vel necessitatis vel utilita-
 tis vel dignitatis; sic non una de omnium transgressionem fertur Sen-
 tentia; nec paria manent discrimina dispares culpas. Porro nec
 pari culpâ negliguntur quæ non pari curâ præcipiuntur nec pari pro-
 inde pœnâ puniuntur. — Nonne Veritas in Evangelio sub no-
 minibus trabis & festucae graves levesque discernit inobedientiae cul-
 pas? Nonne ipsâ disputante immo definiente gradatim nobis distin-
 guitur quæ cuique reatui pœna debeatur dum alium iudicio alium
 consilio alium & gehenna reum esse protestatur?

Cap. 12. Ubique & culpabilis neglectus & contemptus damna-
 bilis est, differunt autem quod neglectus quidem languor inertia
 est, contemptus vero superbiæ tumor. Porro contemptus in om-
 ni specie Mandatorum pari pondere gravis & communiter damna-
 bilis est; neglectus autem in fixis gravior, tolerabilior in mobilibus
 mandatis.

Novit verus humilisque obediens & minima non contemnere &
 maxime curare quæ maxima sunt. — Elatio contemnentis atque
 L 2 impœnitenti;

regard to such Offences, shewing that there is *not* a *Contempt* of GOD's LAW included in them, and that they will *not* be punish'd with a Rejection from Gods Favor.

St. AUSTIN, who entertain'd several Notions, by which in Effect rather a *Rigor* and even *Cruelty* was ascrib'd to GOD, than *Justice and Goodness*, even in the Heat of his Opposition to PELAGIUS dar'd not to assert the *Impossibility of keeping God's Commandments*. My Arguments are levell'd most directly against those who *unite these Rigors*, and advance what the *Gallican* and the *African Father* would in their Turns have been asham'd of.

I KNOW that the *great Lawgiver's Authority* is much and most justly insisted on in the *Divine Laws* themselves, and the terrible Consequences of his Anger copiously represented. And all this has (or may at least but for Mens Obstinacy have) its proper Effect, whilst in infinite Places of these *Holy Digests* there are such *Distinctions* as leave no Room for any to imagine that *equal Punishments*, *equal Degrees of Divine Displeasure* will follow *very unequal Degrees of Sin and Guilt*; or that a Rejection from God's Favor, and eternal

impænitentis obstinatio in minimis quoque mandatis culpam facit non minimam, & convertit in crimen gravis rebellionis nævum satis levem simplicis transgressionis.

Cap. 14. In multis offendimus omnes, & si diximus quia peccatum non habemus ipsi nos seducimus. Sed non continuo ut aliquid præterimus perimus, præsertim cum nos Scriptura consoletur, si quis peccaverit inquit Advocatum habemus Jesum Christum, & ipse est propitiatio pro peccatis nostris, ille pro transgressoribus non tamen pro contemptoribus legitur supplicasse.

Punishment,

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Punishment, will be the Doom of *those*, whose *main Care and Study* it has been to obey and serve him; which is a Thing that *some Expositors* of this Law need to be reminded of.

It may be said that as a *Rigor* is often necessary, and therefore is commendably us'd amongst Men in their Transactions with one another, it is a Presumption that *He* that made us may use such Rigor towards his *Creatures*, *Justice* in Men being (as was before observ'd) a *Shadow of the Divine Justice*. In particular it may be urg'd that the *Laws* which concern any whole and large Community, are made and executed with Rigor. *Forfeitures* and *Penalties* are frequently incurr'd by Mens *Ignorance of the Law* and for Omission of *minute* Circumstances prescrib'd by the Law, when it has been obey'd in all its *important* Parts, and *no Contempt* in the Omission.

To be prolix and operose in answering this Objection would be unnecessary and therefore improper in such an Essay and Conciseness as I have propos'd. However I may allow my self, I think without any Impropriety or breach of Method, to touch a little upon it in a more general manner as a matter not altogether foreign to our Subject, the better to root out the ill Impressions some may have admitted, of a dreadful and *cruel Rigor* in the *DIVINE LAW*, and the *Procedure* of GOD with Men in relation thereto. For surely it is *some Grounds* for presuming that his *Procedure* with us his *Creatures* will *not be rigorous and cruel* who has inwardly commanded, and naturally dispos'd us to use *Equity* and *Lenity* towards our *Fellow-Creatures*,

Creatures, to love and respect those that practise it, and has made us necessarily to sustain an ill Impression of all in whose Temper and Practices we shall discover the *Reverse* of it.

HUMAN *Laws* then of the greatest Credit do not recommend or encourage an *undistinguishing Rigor*, but do make *equitable* and *favourable Allowances*, *suitable* to the Nature and Frailties of Mankind. They restrain by proper and *severer Penalties* the *greater Crimes*; and others, where there is not so great *Atrocity*, are more *lightly punish'd*; but many *Negligences* and *Imprudences* are *pardon'd* to human Frailty, and look'd upon as compatible with Probity and Goodness.

THE *Civil Law* particularly is equitable and accurate in distinguishing of Faults, and *proportioning Reparations* and Punishments, and it is the *Principle* which goes through all that Law, that Actions are to be carefully distinguish'd, and Faults, such as may not be excus'd, to be punish'd according to the *Circumstances* of *Light* and *Knowledge* that Men had to conduct themselves by; and according to the *different Degrees* of *Malignity* that appear'd when both the *Facts* and the *Disposition* of *Delinquents* were duly weigh'd.

THIS *Equity* and Consideration of the Nature of Mankind, in this Law, appears by the *Distinctions* made there in the matter of INFAMY. For the Word INFAMY, tho' now it is us'd more *arbitrarily* and *loosely*, and is but a *vague* kind of a Word, had there an Import *more precise* and *fix'd*.

THE *Civil Law* did not make INFAMY the Attendant and Punishment of *every Fault* of a Man, where-
by

by another *suffer'd Damage*, and even *considerable Damage*, unless there appeared to be very *foul and aggravating Circumstances* in it.

THUS, to mention one Instance, when a *Tutor* was found guilty of ill Conduct and Mismanagement of his Trust by *slighter Negligencies* [*per Culpam levem*] there was no *Infamy* in the Case. But the Law is express and clear, and every Man naturally assents to the Justice of it, that he is *infamous* if he be prov'd guilty of injuring his *Pupil* by FRAUD.

THERE is yet another *middle Case*, which I take no notice of, both because it is a *dubious* one, and Commentators differ in it; and also because I have urg'd that which was *most proper*, and *sufficient* for my Purpose. For if I thought it * rather to be the Sense of the Law, *Quod Tutor remotus ob culpam latam non fit infamis*, that a Tutor remov'd for a Fault

* They who will be pleas'd to read the thirteenth Chapter of GERARDUS NOODT's *Probabilia Juris* will find there several very plausible Arguments on this Head adorn'd with critical and polite Learning; nor is it so odd an Assertion as may at first be conceived, since they who go this way do interpret *lata Culpa* to be *Segnitias*, *Simplicitas*, *Stupiditas*, *non intelligere quod omnes intelligunt*, and they suppose that a Man acts alike stupidly in his own Affairs; otherwise it is not *lata Culpa*, they say, but *Dolus*.

But I confess I rather think with Cujacius, and the more general Current of Doctors, that *Infamy* might follow gross Faults of a Tutor or Guardian duly made appear, and this without abating of any of my Respect for that very learned and worthy Professor, and once my obliging Preceptor, who was of another Temper than is wish any whom he instructed should

——— *jurare in verba Magistri,*
or follow his Instructions without Examination.

on this side of *Fraud* is not punish'd with *Infamy*, yet I should not have brought this into my Argument, lest I might seem to encourage a Notion which certainly is a very *false* and *mischievous* one, that GOD will excuse *gross* Sins as well as our *Ignorances* and *slightest Negligencies*; not that I would be understood to insinuate that in all the Cases I have mentioned, a Man shall be punish'd *just in a like proportion'd Degree*, or be *absolv'd* by GOD, as these Laws have *punish'd* or *excus'd*.

TAKING this *Caution* therefore with us, for *abundans cautela non nocet*, we may observe that these sort of *Distinctions* are equally reasonable in infinite other particular Cases, and that the *Reason of things*, in which they are founded, will be regarded always in the Application and proportioning of Punishments; not only by *equitable Men*, but most certainly by the *Divine Justice* also.

DOES a Man whether he be *Guardian* or a *Stranger* by *deliberate meditated Fraud* rob the Orphan, spoil the Fatherless and Widow? Does he of *malicious Wickedness* injure and oppress those that are within his cruel Power? Is he an *Adulterer*, *Fornicator*, *Drunkard*, *Extortioner*, *Murderer*, or guilty of *other habitual gross Sins*? It is fit and right he should be *INFAMOUS* amongst Men, and there can be no doubt but that this Man without *Repentance* and *Amendment* stands excluded from the *DIVINE FAVOR* and the *Hopes of Heavenly Bliss*.

BUT does a Man prejudice and damnify others, as it oft happens in their Concerns [*per Culpam levissimam*]

man] by a *slight Negligence*, by a *Slip of Memory*, by a *Mistake almost unavoidable*, or *very natural* in the Circumstances he was in? No *wise Lawgivers* will brand with *Infamy*; no *equitable and dispassionate Man* will prosecute with *unforgiving Rigor*, such *Slips and Failures*, nor wish to see them *expiated with severe and therefore disproportion'd Sufferings*. Neither can it be a right and honorable Conception of the *Supreme*, who is undoubtedly the *Best of all Beings*, that *He* will, for Faults of *this sort*, reject from his *Favor*, and consign to *Eternal dreadful Torments* those Persons, whose *main Study, Care, and Delight* it is to do his *Will*.

It is not the *smaller Trespasses* and *Punctilios* that wise and good Laws do principally concern themselves withal; it is not the *weak, unskilful*, and the *barely and slightly negligent*, especially of smaller Matters, that they point their *formidable Penalties*, and *heavy Artillery* at, but against those who offend of *malicious Wickedness*; and it is a high Reflection upon the *Wisdom* of our *Governors*, or it implies at least a *capital Defect of Power* in the *Government* to say, that the *Laws are like Cobwebs made to catch petty Offenders, but are broken thro'* and have no Effect upon the greater *Delinquents*. A Saying that is dictated by a *peevish Temper* rather than by good Sense; and has more of *Boldness* in it than *Truth* or *Decency*.

Wise *Lawgivers* guard as well as they can against *all Offences, all Inconveniences to the Public, and Occasions of Disquiet amongst the Members of the Society*; but they do not mean to punish *with Severity*, nay do not punish at all every the *smallest Neglect and Oversight*.

M

I HOPE

I HOPE there needs not the *ill-natur'd Philosopher's* whimsical Expedient of a *Candle and Lanthorn* at Noon-day to find an *honest Man*. There is many a good Man, I question not, in every Nation, who *fears God*, and *obeys the Laws* he lives under,

— *qui leges juraque servat:*

and yet as all Men have their *Faults* and *Frailties*, possibly there may be none of *these good Men* (even those who deserve the *highest Posts of Honour* their Prince can bestow) but who are Offenders in *some Instances* against the *Laws of their Country*, i. e. by *Imprudence* or *Negligence*, in short, if *Rigor* was to take place and not *Equity*; which we have no Reason to complain of, and say it does in regard to the *Laws of our Country*; much less in the Case we are treating of, the *DIVINE LAWS*.

THERE are *Courts* among us it is true, where many do imagine that all Offences whether greater or less, whether they be against Piety and good Morals, or whether it be the *Non-payment of the smallest Tithes* or *Church-Sessments*, are punish'd alike with one equal and heaviest Sentence, *viz.* that of *Excommunication*.

BUT this is a Mistake, there being no lighter Offences, *unaccompany'd with Contempt and Contumacy*, punishable after that manner; and no Court can ever esteem *Contumacy* other than as a *heinous Offence*. And I will add further, that I believe the *Judges* of those Courts have so great a respect for the *Law* from which they take their commonest Appellation, that in pursuance of its Rules and Accuracy they would *more exactly proportion Penalties or Censures to Offences*, by

using

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using a *greater Variety* of them, if both the *Nature* of their Jurisdiction and *Extent* of their Power would admit of it.

IT must after all be allowed that the *Nature of Human Society*, as the Circumstances of Mankind are, does indeed require that *Non-compliance* with the *Laws* of a *Community* should be provided against by considerable Penalties, which in *some Cases* may prove to be *rigorous* and *hard*. But from hence we see there arises a frequent Necessity of *appealing* to the *Sovereign's Wisdom*, or there is found Occasion to erect *standing Courts of Equity* to *abate* and *qualify* the *Rigor* of such *Laws*, and to relieve Men; or else it often happens that *summum Jus* is *summa Injuria*; and thus the good of the *Community*, the whole Body, is consulted and procured at the *Expense* and by the *Hardships* of *some* of its *unfortunate Members*; which can never be suppos'd to take place in GOD's Proceedings, it being a *Defect* of *Wisdom* or *Power* (such indeed as is inseparable from us and our Circumstances) that occasions these inequitable Rigors.

IT is evidently better for the *Community* that even an *innocent* Person now and then should suffer Inconvenience, and be liable to Penalties, than that it should be in the Power of every *Offender* to secure himself from them by a *hardy Assertion* of his *Ignorance*. From whence it happens oftentimes, that whilst such a *Magistrate* is giving the *severer* Sentence as the *Law* prescribes, tho' he is very sensible he is discharging his Duty, yet he finds a *sort of Reluctance* and *some troublesome Impressions* from his *Compassion* and *Good-nature*;

and he would more willingly *relieve* this very excusable, or perhaps intirely innocent Person, than he would fix these *Penalties* and *Inconveniences* upon him, were it consistent with the Duty of his Post, and could he certainly answer for the Consequences of such *Indulgence* that might affect the Public.

My View is here *principally* indeed to the Affairs of Mankind as they are transacted by the Mediation of a *delegated Magistrate*, though if we should extend it to those *uncommon* Cases where the *Magistrate Supreme* does interpose, the Force of the Argument will in a great Measure still revert. For though it is natural for Men to love and venerate such *princely Clemency*, and it is natural for us to look upon it not only as a *Royal* but a *Godlike* part, yet this *Limitation* is always understood--- if this *Clemency* be mix'd with *Caution*, and does not exert it self too frequently and abundantly to the *Prejudice of the Community*.

HERE then the *Commiseration*, the *kind and benevolent Mind* of such a Judge may be apply'd to the great *Judge of Men*, but surely not this *Incapacity to relieve with Equity*. The *frail mortal Judge* acts *rigorously* and *severely* either for that he wants *Equity* and *Humanity*, or in many Cases because he wants the *Power and Means* to apply the Relief of *Equity*, without *Inconvenience* and *Prejudice* to the whole Society; but the *Almighty Judge* who can never be imagin'd to want *Power*, or to fear any such *Inconveniences*, should neither be thought to *practise* any such *Rigors* and *Severities*. It becomes necessary therefore by another *Image* taken from *Earthly things* and the usages of Men

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to supply what is wanting in this to represent rightly the *Benignity and Clemency of GOD*.

AND thus we come now in Pursuance of our proposed Method to consider what is the common *Practice of Mankind* with respect to *Commands* that are founded in *Paternal or Domestic Power*, which is unquestionably a very *proper and pertinent* Consideration, since our *Definition of DIVINE PROVIDENCE* expresses *GOD's* Governing the Universe to be a *PATERNAL GOVERNING* of it; and above all since *CHRIST* and his *Gospel* delights to represent it in the same manner; so that this will be a good Advance in the illustrating and establishing the *Actual Providence of God* in this Branch of it.

GOD's GOVERNMENT over Men has ever been represented and imag'd by *Political Government* amongst Men.

Οὗτος πρύτασις ἢ ἡγεμὼν ὄντων καὶ γυνομένων ἀνθρώπων.

Ἄναξ, βασιλεὺς, νομοθέτης—

ALL the Words which are us'd to denote a *political Power*, whether *Legislative* or *Executive*, have been here apply'd. But still they who have spoken of the *DIVINE PROVIDENCE and Government over Men* with the *greatest Accuracy and Wisdom*, have added *further Images* from other *Species of Power* us'd amongst Men, to supply as far as they could the Defect which was in that of *political Power* fully to represent the *Divine Clemency and Goodness*, which cannot indeed be *adequately* represented by *any Image* at all of *earthly Things*.

THUS

THUS PYTHAGORAS, PLATO, and all his School, *Apuleius, Plutarch*, with others of the *gravest Heathens* speak very frequently of GOD's *paternal Ordination*, which the *Platonics* bring into the *very Definition* of DIVINE PROVIDENCE.

AND the *Word* that is now as commonly us'd as any in our Language in speaking of the *Providence of God* is directly a Greek Word. I mean the Word OECONOMY which was us'd to denote the DIVINE PROVIDENCE *probably* before any Word which is now us'd to denote it, in any whether living or dead Language in the World.

THE *Hebrew Language* as I take it has *no one Word* to denote *Providence* by as peculiar to GOD, nor do we find that Word indeed apply'd to GOD either in the *Old or New Testament*. I think I can go near to fix the Age of the *Latin Word PROVIDENTIA*, for the *Learned Romans* in the Declension of the Republic did commonly make use of the *Greek Word* *πρόνοια* when they discours'd of GOD's *Providence*; and so CICERO (who we know enrich'd his own Language with many Words it wanted, especially upon such grave Subjects) represents *Velleius* as using the *Greek Word* *πρόνοια* which, says he, in *Latin* we may call *Providentia*; and very probably that might be the *first time* it ever was so call'd; and as for this *Greek Word* I find in the *Life of PLATO* that he first called the *Providence of GOD* by the Name of *πρόνοια*. But however he did not discard the old Word *οἰκονομία* or its Verb by which *Pythagoras* and others had us'd to express the *Providence of GOD*.

BUT

BUT if I be out in *my Conjecture* and Criticism, it signifies little or not at all to my Argument, which is not built upon a *Criticism* or *Words only*; for whatever the Word may be that shall be us'd to express a *familiar* and especially a *parental* Power, it evidently gives us another and a further *Idea of Goodness and Clemency* than *Political* Power does. And this Argument is of very great Weight, because this *Oeconomy* and *Paternal Ordination of GOD*, of which those Antients so often speak, is *confirm'd* and *authenticated* by our Blessed SAVIOUR's Representation of *GOD's PROVIDENCE* and *Procedure* with Men, and by the *Stress* which the *Gospel* lays hereon.

NOW we are not to form our Notions upon this matter as to the Fact and Practice of Mankind, from some *particular odd Instances*, or the *unnatural* Behavior of some inhuman Tyrants and Monsters of Men, but from the Conduct of those who have merited the Goodwill and Esteem of Mankind, and have us'd their Power *naturally* and *laudably*. And this being premis'd, we may venture to affirm, not only that *Paternal* but even that *Despotic* Power, taking the Word in its *antient* and *proper* Signification, is not exercis'd, *i. e.* it is not *commonly* or *naturally* exercis'd with *Rigor*; for *Despotic* Power properly signifies no more than the Power of a *Master* over his Servants (which indeed was greater formerly than in the present Ages) tho' later Usage has given it a very different Import.

EVERY Man of *Candor* and *Good-nature*, indeed every Man of *common Equity* will accept of the *Obedience* of his *Sons* or *Servants*, who do diligently strive

to do his Pleasure and his Commands, although in some smaller matters it happen that by *Mistake*, by *Unthoughtfulness*, thro' great *Weariness*, perhaps or *slighter Negligencies* they do not fulfil all that ever he requir'd of them.

Now these *merciful Allowances* and *indulgent Treatment*, all that kind of dealing of *Masters* and *Fathers* which is *furthest from Rigor* towards those who are subject to their respective Authorities, is not only commended, but is also made an *illustration of GOD's good and merciful Dealing* with us frequently by our BLESSED SAVIOUR.

HEAVEN is certainly not shewn to Men in *Mockery*, it is not inaccessible; Men may strive indeed to enter in, and carry their *Vices* thither along with them; they may strive to enter into it *upon other Terms and Conditions* than GOD has prescrib'd; they may strive *faintly and remissly*, soon discontinue and give up their Attempt and Hope; in these Cases indeed they may *strive to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven and shall not be able*; but no Man need nor ought to fear that he shall be excluded from God's Favor, and number'd with the Transgressors doom'd to Punishment, if he *perseveres in striving* and uses his *best Efforts and Diligence sincerely* to do *God's Will*.

WE are assur'd by CHRIST that none shall enter into Heaven, but they *who do the Will of his Father*; and yet we are told that *in many Things we all offend* whilst it is true also that *he that is born of God doth not sin*; which with many other Passages of Scripture that might be alledg'd, must be reconcil'd by this Distinction

inction of a *twofold Obedience*, and *difference of Sins*, of which I have been speaking.

I PERSWADE my self there is nothing I have advanc'd, that opens a Door to *Licentiousness*, or that can encourage Men to be *negligent of their Duty*.

CONFIRM'D *Habits of gross Sins*, manifold Instances of *Contempt* will be punish'd more severely than *one Expression* of it; yet *one such wilful Contempt* will expose a Man to the *Anger of GOD*; will chase away the *salutary and comfortable Influences* of his *gracious Spirit*; and leave such Person dreadfully expos'd to the *Incurfions and Ravages* of every extravagant and criminal *Passion*.

AND even *Negligences*, if *unwatch'd* and *unrepair'd*, will pave the Way for *Sins of another Nature*. There is always naturally a *Gradation of Sin*.

NEMO malus subito est: adfit cautela, parit quodd
Culpa levis latam, lataque Culpa Dolum.

AND therefore it behoves us to take care that we do not take occasion from the *Goodness* of GOD to indulge our *Lusts*, and live securely in a State of *Wilful Disobedience* to his *Laws*; for notwithstanding that GOD is certainly good and not a hard and cruel Master, yet the Servant that *knows* his *Master's Will* and *does it not* will assuredly be beaten with *many Stripes*; when he may see and reproach himself for his own Folly and Perverseness, but can have no pretence to impeach the *Divine Justice*, or to require and call back again that *Goodness* by which he would not be led to

N

Repentance

Repentance and Obedience but had rejected and despis'd it.

I HOPE it will not be thought that my contending in the preceding Chapter for a *fixt and determinate Law*, and pleading in this for an *equitable Latitude*, as to *acceptable Obedience*, and great Differences in, or absolving from Punishment in some Cases, are inconsistent and destructive of each other.

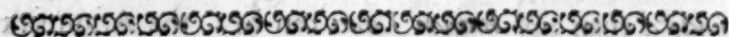
FOR in the *former Chapter* I never urge the Differences and natural Relations of Things as *detach'd and abstracted* from the *Disposition and Knowledge*, in short from the *Rationality of the Agent*. I suppose Cases where the *Proportion of Things*, and the *Appointment of the Law* may be *difficult* to be seen; or *may not be seen*, yet without a *Forfeiture of the Divine Favor*; and by the Instances that every one can easily and readily think of, it will appear that *human Laws* are a *certain Rule*, and do *determinately* shew what is right and what is wrong, although they may in extraordinary Cases even absolve some Offenders who *sin out of Ignorance &c.* and may also in many Cases prescribe a *Punishment* or a *Temperament* of it more suited to the *Disposition and Mind* with which a Fact was committed, than to the *Nature* or the *Consequences of such Fact*.

AND if this be the Case in *human Laws* where all the Art of Man oftentimes *cannot publish* and make them known to *all Persons* that are concern'd in them, then it is still more strongly argu'd, and clearer if possible, that the *Divine Law* which is *generally speaking*, and in the *greater Branches* of it *intimately known* to all Men, (which being thus written on the Tables
of

of Mens Hearts, are *more certainly and effectually promulg'd* than any *human Laws* can be; the Argument is good, I say a *fortiori*) that *much more* may this be a *real, fix'd, determinate Law and Rule*, shewing us what is Good and what is Evil; binding us to the *one* and restraining us from the *other*, notwithstanding that an *Obedience* to it will be *accepted*, which is *mix'd with Imperfections*, and the *Goodness of GOD* will pardon *some kind of Sins* to Mens *Ignorance and Infirmities* when their Heart is right, and it is their *chief Care and earnest Endeavor to obey all his Commands*.

IF I have been prolix and abundant in establishing *this Branch of DIVINE PROVIDENCE* in relation to the *Direction and Government of Men by a good and proper Law*, it is because too many have *disallow'd*, and endeavour'd to *destroy* that which I conceive to be the *proper Foundation*, and solid Ground, whereon *DIVINE PROVIDENCE* is in *this Part* of it to be establish'd; besides that the treating these Points so fully here will give me the Opportunity of treating *more clearly and briefly* of the *penal Sanctions of God's Law*, and of his *Justice in General*, which, as I have once before observ'd, cannot be conceiv'd as *regardless of Proportion*.





C H A P. V.

A Vindication of Divine Providence in regard to the Passions of Men.

THE WISDOM of GOD has made *this World* a Theatre for the Trial of Mens *Virtue*, and this is a *real* and not a *Mock-trial*, as it wou'd be upon the Supposition of a FATAL NECESSITY of ill Success, or that Destiny apart our *Task was not suitable to our Abilities*; that we were utterly incapable of encountering the *Difficulties* we meet with in the way of our *Obedience to the Divine Commands*, by an INTERNAL NECESSITY arising from our MAKE and CONSTITUTION, and in particular from the *Irritableness and Vehemence* of our PASSIONS.

FATAL NECESSITY and DESTINY (to touch but in a few Words upon that *worn Topic*) is inconsistent with the Obligation of the DIVINE LAW; and the *Sentiment* of it, if pursu'd to its Consequences, would wipe out all *Religion* and *Morality* like a *Sponge*.

ALL Moral Obligation, Accountableness, and every thing that a LAW implies would upon this Supposition be out of the Case, and have no more relation to *Men* than now they have to *Brutes*, or to *Machines*.

JUSTIN MARTYR says, that *Christians* did not believe a *Fatal Necessity*, or forcible Predetermination to their Actions, but altogether disown'd and rejected it, because it was contrary to the *Fundamental Truth* taught by

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by the *Prophets*, that there should be *Punishments* and *Rewards* render'd to every Man according to the *Merits* of his Works.

MORE may be seen of the Opinion and Belief of *antient Christians* in this Matter in the excellent *critical History of the Apostles Creed*.

AND VOSSIUS names many *antient Fathers* of eminent Note, such as BASIL, GREGORY NAZIANZEN, CHRYSOSTOM, &c. whose common Sentiment, he says, it was, that Men not only *knew* what they ought to do, but had the *free Will* and *Power* also to perform what was good. *Nec solum natura scire homines quod facto opus sit, sed eas esse liberi arbitrii vires, ut his operari bonum possit, eorundem Patrum Sententia est.* Hist. Pelag. p. 370.

BUT I will finish what I thought fit thus briefly to say upon this Subject, with a Quotation from a *celebrated * Author*, not for the sake of his Credit, or under any pretence of *Authority*, but purely because his Words are strong, and better than any I could put the Sentiment into; which is so far from being *my own Thought* by way of Invention or Peculiarity, that I take it to be *every one's* Thought, and that it is really felt even where the greatest Endeavors are us'd to stifle it under the Notion of its being derogatory to the *Power* or the *Grace* of GOD. It is thus:

“ IF there were a *Compulsion* or *Necessity*, the Will
“ would be no more accountable for willing than a
“ Body for being mov'd. It is this Command over

* Late ARCHBISHOP of CAMBRAY.

“ my

“ my own Actions that renders me inexcusable when
 “ I will Evil, and Praise-worthy when I will Good.
 “ This is the *Basis* of all Policy, all Instruction, and
 “ Rules of Morality. In one Word the Merit and
 “ Demerit of human Actions is built and rests hereon,
 “ that we have *free Will*. It is what the *Shepherds*
 “ and *Husbandmen* sing in the Fields; what *Merchants*
 “ and *Artificers* suppose in their Traffick; what *Ma-*
 “ *gistrates* believe in their Councils, what *Doctors* teach
 “ in their Schools; It is that in short, which no Man
 “ of Sense can call seriously in Question. That Truth
 “ imprinted in the Bottom of our Hearts is always
 “ *suppos’d in Practice*, even by those Philosophers who
 “ would endeavor to shake it by their empty Specu-
 “ lations. The *intimate* Evidence of that Truth is like
 “ that of the first Principles which want no Proof,
 “ and which serve themselves as Proofs to other Truths
 “ that are not so self-evident. I am intimately and in-
 “ vincibly convinc’d that I can either will or not
 “ will, and that there is in me a *Choice* not only be-
 “ tween willing and not willing, but also between
 “ divers Wills about the Variety of Objects that pre-
 “ sent themselves. I am sensible that I am in the
 “ Hand of my own Council. It is principally in
 “ this for that I am free in my Will that I am God’s
 “ Image and Likeness.”

LET us now consider the Objection or Supposi-
 tion of an INTERNAL NECESSITY of our doing o-
 therwise than we ought, and of INSUPERABLE DIF-
 FICULTY in the way of our Obedience from our
Make and Constitution; from the *Irritableness* and *Ve-*
hemence

hement of our PASSIONS: Let us examine if this also be not a *Fiction* by which Men are very unhappily scared from the attempting or pursuing what is virtuous and laudable, of good Report amongst Men, and acceptable in the Sight of GOD.

OUR PASSIONS are no doubt *capable* of being very *Mischievous* to us, and so is *every Instrument* that is put into the Hands of *free Beings*, *every Object*, and *Thing* whatever that is presented to their Use or Senses. They do seem indeed to *have the Start* of our *Reason*, and to give the Objection its utmost Weight, it must be allowed, that they do display themselves and gather Strength before our *Reason* does at all, or at least in any considerable Degree, exert it self.

THE *Passions* have often and justly been compar'd to *Brute* and *ferocious Beasts*; but yet let us not be rash and hasty to murmur or cast any dishonorable Reflection upon *Providence* on this Account.

FOR wise Men both Antient and Modern, who have made the Comparison of our PASSIONS to *brute Beasts* and most ordinarily to *fierce Horses*, have withal suppos'd them *yok'd in a Chariot*, and *under the Power and Direction of the Driver*, unless it were through his own Fault and Remissness; or at least they have carried on their Allusion suitably to and in a manner proper to give this Sentiment as in those golden Verses of *Pythagoras*,

————— φραζεν ἑκαστα
 ΗΥΙΟΧΥ ΓΥΝΑΪΜ'ΕΝ ΣΙΩΤΕ ΚΑΔΙΠΡΕΘΕΝ ΑΕΪΣΗΥ

Hy

Ἦν δ' ὑπολείψας πῶμα ἱεὶς ἀΐδης ἰκένουσαν ἔλθης
 Ἐστίας ἀθάνατο Θεὸς ἀμβροσίος ἔκλε' δινής.

*Consider all: then in the highest Sphere
 Enthron'd sit Reason steady Charioteer:
 Then shall the Soul to happier Regions fly,
 And once unbod'y'd ever live a Deity.*

IF indeed Men shall voluntarily quit or but give the loose Rein to their PASSIONS they will soon run them into infinite Dangers, and the most fatal Precipices.

BUT when God has given the Reins the Empire over these to Judgment and Reason, his Goodness stands clear'd of all Objection, and the Folly of Men as manifest, if they do not keep a strict Rein over their PASSIONS, if they be not intent and vigilant to preserve this Empire of Reason, if they sottishly and vilely abdicate this Sovereignty, if they renounce this their most valuable Privilege, and despise the Gift of Heaven whereby they are plac'd at such a Distance above the Beasts that perish — whereby they have such an Approximation and Resemblance to their Creator.

THE Comparing Mens Appetites and Passions in some Degree to Brute and fierce Beasts does not therefore by any Means imply, that they who made this Comparison imagin'd that it was out of their Power to rule them. It may justly be argu'd, and some of the antient Philosophers have argu'd to the same Effect, that the superior Faculties of Men are to be exercis'd and improv'd by rational Considerations agreeable to their Nature; but the inferior sensual Appetites are to be

be govern'd by *forcible Discipline* and a Constancy of *customary Restraints*.

THIS is the Method we use in treating *irrational* and *brute Creatures*, and it is found to have such an Effect, that the wildest and seemingly most untameable Animals are yet render'd tractable and obedient and very useful to us by an *assiduous* and *constant Discipline*.

MAN is compounded of a *Spiritual* and *Corporeal*, two very different Natures. Let him make the best of his Affairs, and thank GOD who has given him *Knowledge* and *Means* to correct and amend by REASON any *stubborn Qualities* in his irrational Part.

HE must in order to preserve the *Dignity* and *Rectitude* of his Nature, keep both his *rational Faculties* in proper Exercise, and his *Body* and *bodily Appetites* in such a Temper as Reason shall direct: For Instance in reference to the *Body* I think I may observe, without giving a Handle to *Materialists* and *Fatalists*, that it is suitable to our Natures, and a Part of our Duty to strengthen our *Virtue* by looking to the *Temperature* and *Habit* of our *Body*; by prudent and proper Methods, as by *Abstinence* and *Choice of Meats*, † &c. to
alter

† Proper Exercise, a suitable Air, and choice of Meats are no doubt contributive to the *Soundness* and *Vigor* of our Minds, and to the securing them against *disadvantageous Circumstances* from *bodily Impressions* in regard to *Virtue* as well as *Wit* and *Understanding*. Tully and others before him have made the Observation in the *last* View as to *Liveliness* of Thought, and *Clearness* of Understanding, which they conceiv'd that both a good Air and a proper Diet were assistant to. Etenim licet videre acutiora in-
O genia

alter *such Dispositions* of *Body* as are most *dangerous* to *Virtue* and to induce and improve such as are *amicable* thereto.

genia & ad intelligendum aptiora eorum, qui terras incolanteas, in quibus aer sit purus & tenuis, quam illorum qui utantur crasso cælo atque concreto. Quinetiam cibo quo utare interesse aliquid ad mentis aciem putant. Libr. 2. de N. D. p. 145. Edit. Davis. Where a Note upon the Place presents a Parallel Passage concerning the Air which is still nearer to my Purpose since *Philo* says, that *by Tenuity of the Air the Soul is made Acute*, *Λεπτότην αέρος ἢ ψυχῇ πέρυκεν ἀκονᾶσαι* — and that *Heraclitus* was not out of the Way in saying they were the *wisest* and the *best* Men who liv'd in a dry Soil; his Reason without Question was for that in such Soils there is the *purest Air* — *ἢ γὰρ ἐν γῇ ψυχὴ σφωτάτη καὶ ἀγνή*, not that I would carry the matter so far as those Expressions may do without a commodious Interpretation and very considerable Allowances.

Had I added the *help of Medicine* too, perhaps it might have been maintain'd much upon the same Foundation as that of *Abstinence* and *choice of Meats*, which not only *Pythagoreans* or other *Heathen Philosophers*, but *Christians* too have commonly recommended and practis'd, since there are speedier and greater Effects oftentimes from the former than from the latter in relieving the Soul from Obstructions arising from the Body and Difficulties upon her in the performing her Operations of all kinds, her Intention to *Virtue* as well as her Application to *Arts and Sciences* or any of the *common affairs of Life*. But I choose rather to omit an Argument that might not perhaps appear to others to be good or proper. If any are desirous to see what has been said in Favor of *Abstinence* and the *choice of Food* as to their effect upon the Mind, the above-nam'd Annotator refers to these Authors, *Hieroc.* in *Aur. Carm.* p. 222. *Jamblich.* in *vita Pythag.* § 89. *Clem. Alexand.* *Strom. Lib.* 7. p. 305. where *Sylburgius* has produc'd, he says, several Things of this sort from *Theopompus* and *Plutarch.* *Porphyry* *περὶ ἀποχῆς* lib. 4. § 7. & *Hieronym.* adv. *Jovinian.* Lib. 2. p. 366, 367. Ed. Victor.

THE

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THE recommending of this *Method* and *Bodily Discipline* does imply indeed that the *Body* acts upon the *Soul* as well as the *Soul* does upon the *Body*, but yet does not infer or favor the Notion I am opposing of the *Necessity of our Actions*.

It might be difficult to get clear of this Objection, if I maintain'd with some, that "all that relates to the *PASSIONS* is perform'd by mere *Mechanism*, "that the different *Movements of Nerves* in all the "different *Passions* are not effected by the *Command of the Will*, but on the contrary are perform'd without its *Orders*, and in *contradiction* to them."

THIS is the Account that a celebrated *Divine* * of the *Romish Communion*, and a great Admirer of *St. AUSTIN*, gives of the *Passions*; and he builds an Argument upon this *Hypothesis* for the *PROVIDENCE* of *GOD* in the *curious Structure of the human Fabric* against *Epicurus* and *Lucretius*; but how he will make it consist with the *PROVIDENCE* of *GOD* in reference to the *MORAL WORLD*, I own, I am not able to discern.

BUT the Case I take to be really thus † "It has pleased *GOD* so to unite the *rational Nature* to a "Body of *Flesh and Blood*, that they shall generally "act together, and that the *Soul* shall as well be influenced by *bodily Instincts*, and *Motions of the Blood and Spirits*, as by its own *Thoughts and Reflections*." This is undeniable.

* MALBRANCH. † The Words mostly these, and that which immediately follows an Argument us'd by Mr. LAW in his Remarks upon the Fable of the Bees.

BUT yet Reason and Judgment have the principal part, the *Sway* and *Direction*, as appears by the *Shame* and *Remorse* the Mind is conscious of, when in any Action the *Body* has had the greatest Influence, and when Reason did not bear the principal Direction and Sway. A convincing Argument of the Truth of what I have asserted, that a Man, who in any Instance has yielded to Sin, might have stood victorious over the Impressions from the Body, had he persever'd in the Conflict as became him, had he done all that was in him to do both in the ordering of his Body, and in the exertion of the Mind and rational Faculties.

THEY who are adept in the *Mystical Theology*, and the *Cabbala* of the *Quietists*, will prescribe in general as a *παράσημα*, and it may be as a very easy Remedy which will have an immediate Effect, the drowning all extravagant Passions, especially those which come under the Head of LOVE, in the Love of GOD; an excellent Aim without dispute! The Attainment of which however is not to be hop'd for on a sudden by all the Efforts that human Nature with the ordinary Assistances of Divine Grace can make.

PYTHAGORAS requir'd an *idoneous Auditor* of his Moral Lectures, and repell'd those who were given up to sensual Pursuits, as very unlikely without some better Preparation to receive any benefit by his Instructions.

SOCRATES and PLATO were not so exact and scrupulous. Their Aim was to convert the sensual into a refin'd and spiritual Love. The most amorous Persons they look'd upon to be their fittest Auditors, and peculiarly

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culiarly capable of *loving Virtue* and the *Fountain* of it, by their Addictedness to the Love of *sensible Objects*. A very different Notion from that of the *antient Jews*, who would not permit Men, that were of an Age most subject to the *Passion of Love*, to study or hear the Interpretation of the *Book of Canticles*, though they acknowledg'd it to represent and relate to *spiritual Love* ! But from the above-mention'd Notion and Practice probably it was that the Discourses and Dialogues of *SOCRATES* and his Friends, as *PLATO* represents them, have sometimes Appearances of the *gross sensual* intermix'd even with their sublimest Refinements.

IN short, a *quick and sudden* Transition from a *sensual Passion*, violent and long indulg'd, to the *pure Love* of a *Seraph*, is a thing contrary not only to the known Methods of *Nature*, but to the *ordinary* Methods of *Grace* too.

THE Moralists of the *Quiet School*, the Disciples of a *Bourignon*, or (to give a Name that may less displease and was otherwise in great Esteem) of a * *SALIGNAC*, the Mystics I say will be copious and sublime in general Descriptions of this *spiritual Love*, and demonstrate to us the Reasonableness that *our Love to GOD should be Infinite, and our Love to our selves and other Objects, as being finite Creatures, none at all.*

THIS is as much a *Demonstration*, we are told, as any thing in *Numbers* or *Geometry* possibly can be ; and yet I am apt to think it may look as plain to

* *Late Archbishop of CAMBRAY.*

others,

others, that it is an *Absurdity* to apply the word *Infinite* to *finite Creatures*, or to any of their *Actions* or *Passions*.

THE magnificent Words therefore and general Prescriptions of *this School of Moralists*, I doubt, are of very little use.

AND what indeed can it signify or avail us to be told, as we are by a * late Writer, " That *spiritual Love* is the Tendency of Men's Souls towards the " most amiable Object, wherein they press to be united with their Origin, when he adds that the intelligent Soul would indeed mount towards its *Original* like an Eagle towards the Sun ; *Were it in its proper Vacuity and freed from Lets and Impediments, but that in this her lapsed State she is drown'd—chain'd and fetter'd—drawn and hurry'd away by the Devil—in short is disabled from exerting this inherent and innate Principle of Re-union with its Origin.*

WITHOUT any of these *sublime Soarings* therefore, which before they be examin'd into may work some Effects upon a *warm Fancy*, and mightily affect and amuse Men, and yet do them but little or no real good, all such Speculations apart, which do not seem well grounded, and reducible to *Use and Practice*, it will be enough to say what both *Mystics* and all other good *Moralists* are agreed in, That GOD, who is the *Fountain* of all Excellencies and Perfections, and the Giver of all good Gifts, is undoubtedly

* Dr. CHEYNE's *Essay on Health and long Life* in the Chapter concerning the *Passions*.

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worthy of our highest Regard and best Affections; and that it becomes us *as we are reasonable Creatures*, to take the Advantage of every *Mean and Method* that is in our Power to make this, or any other such good Principle, operate in the time of need to the Cure of our *excessive* and therefore *criminal* PASSIONS. For though it be not a mighty easy thing to CONQUER OUR PASSIONS, yet it is POSSIBLE; if it cannot be done by a *slight and careless Effort*, yet it may by *constant persevering Care*, by a *dextrous Managery*, where they have gain'd a great Head, and a Power too strong to be broken all at once by the most vigorous Opposition.

THERE may be a REVULSION made of the *Spirits* from any of the PASSIONS by the *Introduction* of a *different Idea*, that is *barely innocent*, much more then by a *solid serious Thought*, such as that of the *contemplating the great and adorable PERFECTION*, the *supreme and most amiable EXCELLENCE*, together with the BENEFICENCE and BOUNTY of the CREATOR; such as the Contemplation of ETERNITY, or other Meditations of a resembling Nature. How much more *copiously* will these Ideas once admitted *draw away Supplies* from our *excessive* PASSIONS, till they are reduc'd, by a *constant Practice* of this Method within their *due and appointed Bounds*?

LET us therefore make such *solid Truths* always *present and familiar* to us; and by this means, together with a frequent Recourse to GOD by *Prayer*, we may overcome the *greatest Temptations*, keep our PASSIONS *orderly*, and possess our Souls *serene and easy*,

easy, in the QUIET and the HARMONY of VIRTUE.

LET it not be thought impossible for our PASSIONS to be render'd *tractable* by this *assiduous Discipline* and *Restraint*, though it should be allow'd that they do begin to exert and display themselves somewhat *sooner* than our *Reason* does?

IT should be nothing less certainly than the *fullest* and *most undeniable Evidence of Fact*, that should make us believe, a thing so irreconcilable with the plainest Notions of *Divine Goodness*, as that Men should be carry'd to the Commission of *Sin* by an *absolute irresistible Force*, or any *such Prevalence* of their PASSIONS as themselves did not contribute to, and were culpable in permitting.

BUT I appeal to Mens *Consciences* whether or no they have so evidently *experient'd this*, whenever they have *swerv'd* from their Obedience to GOD. If they *have* done so, then their *Consciences* must have been *clear* and *easy* amidst their *Crimes*; *Terror* and *Remorse* can have no hold of them; the *Abuse of Power and Liberty* is the only Foundation for *Man's Remorse*, or the *Divine Wrath*; Men must be conscious of the *Abuse of this Power*, not of *suffering an irresistible Force*, to be conscious of SIN and GUILT.

WHOEVER therefore is in any instance *conscious of Sin*, by Extravagance of his *Passions*, does *experience* attest the *Fact* to be so as I have represented it: And that there is a *Power* in Man by and through the *Goodness of GOD*, whereby he may deal with his PASSIONS, make them *submit* to *Reason*, and keep them from transgressing their *Bounds*. BUT

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BUT it is not enough to vindicate the *Providence* of GOD from the Imputation of having *planted the Passions in us to our Destruction or Prejudice*; I shall urge some Arguments to make the GOODNESS OF GOD appear yet *more illustrious* in bestowing this Gift upon us, and therefore shall endeavor to shew,

THAT OUR PASSIONS, IF KEPT WITHIN THEIR DUE BOUNDS, ARE USEFUL AND OF GREAT ADVANTAGE TO US.

THERE have been some *Men* here and there who have maintain'd that the PASSIONS *when extravagant and irregular were publickly and generally useful*. They assert that *Fraud*, that *Avarice*, that *Luxury* and *Pride*, in one Word that *Vice is beneficial to Society*, and that GOD's *Providence* is conspicuous in this *Usefulness and Necessity of Vice and irregular Passions of Men*. Unworthy Thought! That GOD hath need of the sinful Man! That his *Providence*, which as to Man does *principally* consist in *giving him a Law*, should as much concern it self to effect a *Disobedience* of Man to this *Law*, as it intends and prescribes a holy *Obedience* to it!

THIS is a Notion too apparently absurd, one would think, to need being formally combated, or to be embrac'd by serious Persons, who make any Pretensions to conduct themselves by Reason.

BUT when we assert the PASSIONS *whilst regulated or moderated to be innocent, and also USEFUL*, we have considerable Adversaries, the whole grave Sect of the STOICS, and the Great Roman, who in this Point

falls in with them, and is their zealous Advocate. But TULLY's Plea and Argument *here* are weak and inconclusive.

HE is notable to destroy or invalidate the Arguments of the PERIPATETICS, which he represents and opposes. * He is almost continually *begging the Question*, *i. e.* taking the Thing for granted which it is his Business to prove; and for this Reason his *Harangues* against admitting a *little Evil*, and his Definitions and Descriptions of the *Passions* are trifling and beside the Purpose. For if we *allow* that the PASSIONS in the *Mind* are *analogous* to *Diseases* of the *Body*, that they are *disorderly* Motions of the *Mind*, *mischievous* to it, and *averse* to *Reason*, then it will be ridiculous indeed to say upon that *Supposition*, that they are innocent and *useful*. And if LACTANTIUS represents the Opinion of the PERIPATETICS exactly and rightly, when he says, *that they held the Passions to be Vices, and yet taught that they ought to be moderated* [Vitia esse concedunt, sed ea mediocriter temperant, p. 557. Edit. Sparke] the PERIPATETICS must have us'd the Word [VITIUM] VICE in a very improper and *uncommon* Sense. But I have a Suspicion *this Writer*, who in many Things is very *unaccurate* and *injudicious*, has made use

* Cicer. in Tusculan. Disp. Lib. 4to. Nihil interest utrum moderatas Perturbationes adproben an moderatam Injustitiam moderatam Ignaviam, moderatam Intemperantiam, &c.

P. 263. Perturbationes sunt ut paulò ante diximus turbidi Animorum concitatique motus averfi a Ratione & inimicissimj Menti.

of a *Word* the STOICS might call the PASSIONS by, in representing the Sentiment of the PERIPATETICS, and by that Means has made it appear, as it does, very odd and unaccountable; and I shall in the Sequel give a *particular* Reason which will shew, that this vehement *Suspicion* is not ill-grounded.

I BEG Leave to observe upon this Occasion (and I think it is not a Digression from the Subject, nor unnecessary to observe) that it is very unaccurate and apt to introduce Perplexity and Confusion, for Men to use the *Phrases* of TULLY concerning the PASSIONS, in which Point he was a *Stoic*, as they often do when they reject the *Stoical* Errors, and go upon quite different and contrary Principles.

IF we mean nothing more by PASSIONS than a more vehement Inclination of the Mind towards some Objects, or Aversion from them (accompany'd * perhaps with a quicker Motion of the Blood or Spirits) but all on this side of Irregularity, Disorder and Sin, why should we affect to call these Motions by the Name of PERTURBATIONS of the Mind, a Word which naturally enough gives an ill Idea, and the ill Import of which is sufficiently known and fix'd by ZENO's Definition of it, alledg'd and commended by * TULLY, That PERTUR-

* That Divine is not singular in the Notion, who says that the Love of Truth, of Virtue, of GOD Himself, is always attended by some Motion of the Animal Spirits; that the Thoughts of Eternity, the Fear of Hell, the Hope of eternal Happiness, tho' they be insensible Objects, yet do they raise in us proper Passions, with suitable Motions of the Blood and Spirits. However I choose to intimate this after the Academical Manner, rather as probable than as certain and beyond Contradiction.

BATION is a *Commotion of the Mind against Reason and Nature*, *Perturbatio est averſa a Ratione contra Naturam Animi Commotio.*

TULLY us'd this Word to denote the PASSIONS, ſays *Quintilian* perhaps and *Busby*, He did ſo, and why? Becauſe it was a proper Word to expreſs the *Sentiment* he, together with the *Stoics*, had about the PASSIONS which is equally a Reason and convincing Argument, that Men who have *different Sentiments* are *improper* in the Uſe of it.

WHEN he does not wander from, but keeps cloſe to the Point in Diſpute, he finds the Argument ſo *preſſing*, that he is oblig'd to ſay * he ſpeaks of no other but a *conſtant and wiſe Man*, which is pretty near to the giving up of his Argument, if the PASSIONS may be *uſeful* to all but ſuch. For the *Vir conſtans & ſapiens* of the *Stoics* in their own Account is a *rare Sort of a Bird*, according to that of the Poet who was one of them.

† *Rari quippe boni, vix ſunt totidem numero quot
Thebarum Portæ vel divitis Oſtia Nili.*

§ *Good Men are ſcarce, the juſt are thinly ſown,
They thrive but ill, nor can they laſt when grown:
And ſhould we count them, and our Store compile,
Yet Thebes more Gates would ſhew, more Months the Nile.*

* *Utile eſt eum uti Motu Animi qui uti Ratione non poteſt.*

† *Juven. Sat. 13. v. 26. § Mr. Creech's Tranſlation.*

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HE allows that *Orators* and *Advocates* must feign themselves touch'd with *PASSIONS* to move their Audience, but that supposing them to be wise Men, they really have none of these *Passions* which they seem to discover; which is all *gratis dictum*, and being said without Proof we may for that and other Reasons look upon it as *improbable*.

HE declares for *himself*, that he never was mov'd with *any Degree of Passion*, when he perform'd the bravest Actions in the *Wars* and *Tumults* he was concern'd in. Let us not contradict him then, but I hope he does not affirm (because no Man could be so complaisant to believe him had he asserted) that he never was affected with the *Desire of Glory* in a Degree warm enough to be call'd a *Passion*. He would scarcely, I think, have deny'd that he was in any Sort animated to the better Performance of worthy Actions by *that Principle and Passion*; and yet the same *Conclusions* may be drawn as to our present Argument, from his warm *Desire of GLORY*, as might have been from his being affected with a *Passion* where there was an Ingredient of *ANGER*, which he thinks it of so great Consequence to deny.

I WILL not commend a *Passion for GLORY*, nor justify it, in *such a Height* as it evidently appear'd to be in this *dispassionate Stoic*, (for a *Stoic TULLY* certainly was in this Point we are treating of) but in general, a *Passion for GLORY* may be referr'd to a good End, the *public Use*, the *GLORY OF GOD*, as well as the Preservation of our *good Name*.

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It may be restrain'd within due *Bounds*, and then it may, and generally is found to have very good and happy *Influences* and *Effects*; whether it be in *brave Achievements* of the *Hand*; generous *Self-Denials* for *publick Benefit*; or Application of the *Mind* in the Search of *useful Inventions*, and in *improving the Arts of Life*.

BUT to go on with our Reflections upon TULLY's Manner of treating this Argument, and to vindicate the PERIPATETICS in this Point, of the USEFULNESS OF REGULATED PASSIONS, both from *his*, and from some other Misrepresentations. It is very *unfairly* that He represents VICES as Instances of PASSIONS such as are in Debate, and then triumphs in an easy Victory, having fought without an Adversary. For tho' an *odd Man* or two may hold such a *Paradox*, that VICES and PASSIONS *irregular and extravagant are beneficial*, yet, if I mistake not, the PERIPATETICS, against whom TULLY was disputing, needed not (neither perhaps any other Persons at that Time) to be argu'd out of that *Absurdity*.

THERE is indeed a *Passage* or two in LACTANTIUS, which looks as if the PERIPATETICS had held such Opinions, in reference to which I have before hinted my Suspicions, that it is an *unfair Representation* of their *Tenet*, for which I will now produce my *Reasons*.

HE shews a very great *Innacuracy* and *Perplexedness* in all *that part* of his Argument; sometimes finding fault with the PERIPATETICS for allowing of *Vices*; and at others, within a Page or two, being angry with

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vitia ex
faciunt
bere ac
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Ubi vit
dem ubi
† De
ingenera
tutem si
fectibus.
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DIVINE PROVIDENCE. III

with the STOICS, that by a clear extirpating of * *Vices*, he says, would also take away *Virtue*; and of this he gives Instances in the particular PASSIONS.

Now if he misrepresents and does an Injury to his *own* Sentiment, it will not be so much to be wonder'd at if he misrepresent those of *other Men* too. And I take it that in this Matter he does both the one and the other. For it will appear without much difficulty to an *attentive Reader*, that his own meaning, when he speaks of the *Usefulness of Vice*, is only this, † that it is necessary to a Man's *Virtue* in this his State of Trial, that there should be a possibility and opportunity of his embracing *Vice*, as well as of his embracing *Virtue*; and that the PASSIONS are in some sort the *Matter of Vice* and of *Virtue*, the *Means* and *Instruments* of this Trial. And again, that the PERIPATETICS never held, that the *Passions were Vices*, and that yet they were useful and were not to be extirpated, I am inclin'd to believe, not only from the manifest Ab-

*Lib. 6. Inst. §. 15. Sed homines prudentes non intelligunt cum vitia ex homine tollunt etiam se virtutem tollere, cui soli locum faciunt. Nam si virtus est in medio iræ impetu seipsum cohibere ac reprimere, quod negare non possunt, caret ergo virtute quisquis irâ caret. Si virtus est libidinem corporis continere, virtute careat necesse est qui libidinem quam temperet non habet.--- Ubi vitia non sunt nec virtuti locus est, sicut nec victoriæ quidem ubi adversarius nullus est.

† Deus cum primum hominem fingeret mirabili Providentia ingeneravit ei prius istas animi Commotiones ut posset capere virtutem sicut terra culturam, posuitque materiam vitiorum in affectibus.---Nec enim quicquam vitiosum nasci potest sed vitia fieri, si malè utamur affectibus, si benè, virtutes.

surdivy

surdity of the Sentiment, but * also for *this good Reason* that LACTANTIUS himself helps us to, *viz.* that the PERIPATETICS, by his own Account of them in another place, endeavor'd to shew, it was with a wonderful *Providence* that GOD had arm'd us with these *Affections* (speaking of the *Passions*) which because they are commonly VITIOUS IF THEY BE EXCESSIVE, they are to be *moderated* and kept within such Bounds as may satisfy Nature.

UPON *such* Arguments then, and so *weak* a Bottom CICERO proceeds to prescribe the *Cure of the Passions*, i. e. the entire Extirpation of them.

HE would *cure* us of COMPASSION, and thereby deprive us of a most *strong and powerful Motive* to our BENEFICENCE and CHARITY.

FOR the Arguments even of the GOSPEL (to leave TULLY in this consideration) do suppose this *Ground-work*, and build upon it; and without *Bowels of Compassion* neither the *Example* nor the *Precepts* of our SAVIOUR would have much Effect upon us.

* Sect. 15. initio. Hæc enim naturalia esse non voluntaria omnium viventium ratio demonstrat quæ iisdem omnibus quatur affectibus. Peripatetici ergo rectius qui hæc omnia detrahi negant posse quia nobiscum simul nata sunt, & conantur ostendere quam providenter & quam necessariò Deus sive Natura (sic enim dicunt) his nos armavit affectibus, quos tamen quia VITIOSI PLERUMQUE SUNT SI NIMII SINT, posse ab homine adhibito modo salubriter temperari, ut tantum homini quantum Naturæ satis est relinquatur.

THE STOICS would utterly take away from us all HATRED and AVERSION, a thing just as *practicable* and as desirable as it would be to destroy all the *Salts* and the *Acids* in the *Body*, and to introduce a mere *Alkali*, with which there could be no *Vigor* or *Activity*, no *Health*, nor indeed so much as *Life* itself. But this Allusion to a *due Tempering of the Juices or Qualities of our Bodies and not of destroying them*, is proper in reference to *all the Passions* in general, and therefore I shall beg leave to touch a little upon it again, at least so far as in a *Quotation* before we quit this Branch of our Subject. In the mean time this may be a hint that without any *Aversion* and *Abhorrence of Vice* we could not have a *proper Security* against it; we should be *remiss* and *cold* in the discharge of our Duty in innumerable Instances; we could not be *vigorous* and *active* in pursuit of, nor perhaps able in some Cases, as our Nature and Circumstances at *present* are, at all to practise Virtue.

FEAR is to be look'd upon as a *Species* or *Off-spring* of this *general Passion* of HATRED, and were we once render'd incapable of it, we should want one of the *strongest Securities* against all that is most *mischievous* and *destructive* to us.

THE STOICS and CICERO with them would take away LOVE, the other *general and Mother-Passion*, (and as such it is that I here speak of it) and withal *deprive* us of a most powerful and excellent Motive to the embracing of VIRTUE; to the endeavoring after our Capacity to unite our selves to the FOUNTAIN and PRINCIPLE

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of it, for he expressly says that * *all Love, all vehement Appetite though it should be of VIRTUE it self, and the chief Good, is to be rooted out.*

IT is *bodily* Concerns perhaps, and the Purposes of *civil Life*, that the PASSIONS are *principally useful* to. They are necessary to keep the World from *stagnating*; to make a *Circulation* not only of *Coins* and *Commodities*, but of *Services* and *friendly Offices*; for the maintaining an *Intercourse* of Mankind with one another; for the *establisbing Communities*; or for the *Preservation of Individuals*.

EXCESSES of Passions are undoubtedly *prejudicial* to our Society with the rest of our Species, but yet *without any Passions* neither can Society be *preserv'd*, neither would it have at all been *founded*.

BUT it is not *civil* and *temporal* Concerns *only* that *regulated Passions* are of *use* in.

THE being *touch'd in a sensible and lively manner* either with present things or the Ideas of things that are past or future; this *Emotion* of our Souls is in *some degree*, and upon *more than a single occasion*, a *Guardian of our Honour* when we may want all the *Assistances* that can be brought to save it.

* Tuscul. Libr. 4to. p. 287. Itaque primum in ipsa cupiditate, cum id solum agitur ut ea tollatur, non est querendum bonum illud necne sit quod Lubidinein moveat; sed lubido ipsa tollenda est, ut sive quod honestum est id sit summum bonum, sive voluptas, sive horum utrumque conjunctum, sive tria illa genera bonorum, tamen etiam si virtutis ipsius vehementior appetitus sit, eadem sit omnibus ad deterrendum adhibenda oratio.

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THE *Passions* of Men and the *Sanctions* of GOD's *Law* are contriv'd in *Wisdom*, and adapted to each other, so as to promote the *best Interests* and *highest Felicity* of Men, if they will but diligently look to the *Government* of them.

LET us instance in the *Passion* of FEAR, which as our *most excellent* TILLOTSON, and other wise Men have observ'd, is most deeply rooted in the sensitive Nature and may seem the least of any of them under the *Government of Reason*, so that the Effects of it are with the greatest Difficulty to be hinder'd. If therefore we can make out the *Goodness of GOD* and his *Providence* over Men in regard to *this* where the Objection lies the strongest, we shall have pretty well surmounted I hope all Difficulties that relate to the *Irritableness* and *Vehemence* of our PASSIONS.

FEAR we have allow'd to be a *very strong Passion*, *Philosophi metum seu timorem ponunt in maximo vitio*, says *Lactantius*,† and we should have little Reason to dispute what SOLOMON has said, even if he had not been an inspired Writer, that *the Fear of Man bringeth a Snare*. Yet let us not imagine that the *very implanting* of this *Passion* of Fear in us is a *Snare*, rather than that it is agreeable to our Circumstances and conducive to our *great Advantage*.

FOR there is an *Antidote* against this FEAR of Men, which we may apply, and which we cannot indeed without the supine Negligence overlook, it is so obvious and does so naturally present it self.

† p. 559.

THE *Fear of Men*, the *Fear of temporal Evils* whatever they be, must be cast out by a *greater Fear*, which is stronger and more powerful, and that is the *Fear of GOD*. There is no Question but the *Fear of GOD* may be admitted into the Soul and operate *more suddenly*, than the *Love of GOD* can; though that which I recommend, and we should all aspire after, is their *constant abiding* in our Hearts, so as to be ready to operate upon all Occasions. * “GOD has “hid in every Man’s Conscience an Awe of his Presence, a Dread of his Infinite Power and Eternal “Justice.

THESE Impressions are so deeply engrav’d in every Man’s Breast, that even wicked and impious Livers cannot utterly deface and erase them. Now let us have not only a *transient* Recourse hereto at far distant Times and Occasions, but let us preserve these *Impressions fresh and lively* by a continual Thought of GOD’s PRESENCE, by a frequent Contemplation of the DIVINE ATTRIBUTES; and if GOD be thus the *Object of our Fear*, the Wrath and Displeasure of *Men* will not be able to work any ill Effects in us; the *Fear of Temporal Calamities* will be cast out by this *Fear*.

THUS our FEAR is that which gives us the *greatest Advantage* in Religion, and is the easiest to be wrought upon of all our Passions, to the happiest and best of Purposes.

* ARCHBISHOP TILLOTSON.

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SOME of the *powerfullest* Arguments to restrain Men from Sin, and to bring them to their *Duty* are the *TERRORS of the LORD*, which is the Reason that St. PAUL so often persuades Men by *that Argument*, and hints that the *Threatnings* denounc'd against the disobedient, was a principal Thing that made the *Gospel* so *powerful to Mens Salvation*.

THIS *Fear* is not disquietous to Men, as all *irregular* and *unduly plac'd Fear* is, because though there may be *at first* a considerable Alloy of the *Servile* in it, this gradually *wears off*, and it becomes more and more *filial* and *pure*. "God will lead them into *Hope*," and from *Hope* to *Love*," and so perfect that in them which might be begun with a great Mixture of carnal and servile Dread.

WE are assur'd of this by *particular Promises*, and indeed without Reference to them we might *otherwise* be led naturally to think in this manner, because this *Fear of GOD* is founded upon the *frequent Contemplation of GOD*, and not of a *single Attribute*, as his *Justice* suppose or his *Holiness*, but of *all his Attributes*. And amongst the *Attributes of GOD* surely his *Goodness*, both in his revealed Word, and in all his Works, is too *bright* and *resplendent* to be *overlook'd*, as well as too full of *Comfort* to be *pretermitted*.

OUR FEAR then and so *all the rest of our PASSIONS* will be, just as we our selves shall order them, either *useful* or *mischievous*, our *Servants* or our *Masters*.

MEN

MEN who have any Sense of Piety in them will raise other sort of *Reflections*, than such as are mix'd with an *ungrateful* and *dishonourable* Imputation upon GOD, in reference to the *common Gifts of Nature*, although they see (what is proverbially said of some of them) that they are *good Servants, but very bad Masters*, that they sometimes get the Mastery, and become *mischievous* and *destructive* even *without any Fault of Men*.

How much Reason is there then that we should readily clear *Divine Providence* from all Imputation of *giving Men fatal and ensnaring Gifts*, by implanting *PASSIONS* in them, which are *so Useful when under Command*, and which can never get the Mastery *without Mens own Fault*?

To say in general and absolutely that the being liable to *PASSIONS* is *necessary* to the being *good and happy* is carrying the Point too far, and laying our selves open to *Objections* that we can never answer; for Beings *superior* to Men are *good and happy without them*. All therefore that we can or need to assert is this, that our *PASSIONS* are *usefully given to us in the Condition and State we are in*, which is evidently a *State of Trial*, and it is the *WILL of GOD* that we should not obtain the *Reward and Crown* till we have *contended earnestly*, and till we have with *Constancy and Resolution* maintain'd our *VIRTUE* against *many Difficulties*, and *much Opposition* the Course of the World would naturally throw in the way of it.

THERE is a *SUITABLENESS* of *GOD's LAW*, and its *SANCTIONS*, of our *FRAME and CONSTITUTION*, of our *STATE and CIRCUMSTANCES* to one another,

another, *Harmonizing together in GOD's Glory and Man's Felicity*. For whatever *Influence* or *Effect* our PASSIONS might have when they should exceed the *Bounds* that GOD has set, we have *Power* to prevent these ill Effects, by restraining our *Passions* within their appointed *Bounds*; and whatever *Influence* they have on *this side* of them, they are both *innocent* and *beneficial*; they are *greatly useful* to the Purposes of *this Life*; they contribute with all other Circumstances of our Being, Condition and Obligations, to our *Improvement* in *Virtue* and the Favor of GOD, wherein our supreme Happiness does consist.

CONCLUDE we then our *Vindication* of DIVINE PROVIDENCE and GOODNESS in *implanting the Passions* in us with observing, that as in every other part of GOD's *Oeconomy* and *Operations*, so here there is *Adaptation*, *Suitableness* and *Harmony*.

PLATO, who never pretended to teach that our PASSIONS ought or were possibly to be *extirpated* out of the Soul, yet taught that the Soul was *Harmony*.

I DO not lay any *great Stress* upon this, because there was too much of *Fancy* in this Notion as he explain'd it, and very ill consequences follow'd from it, as it was represented and explicated by *Aristoxenus*, of which see *Tully's Tuscul.* 1. p. 17. But however it is certain that if Men will use the *Powers* that GOD has given them according to the *Rule* and *Directions* he has given them, their Souls will make the most excellent kind of *Musick* notwithstanding the PASSIONS,

nay

may and * *Theagenes* says further, even by the means of them, which he makes out in this manner.

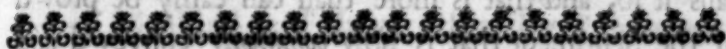
WHAT is it, says he, that you would require to *Health*? Would you take away the *Cold* and the *Hot*, the *Moist* and the *Dry* out of the *Body*? No certainly; for without them there is neither *Health* nor *Life*, but *Health* consists in the due *Mixture* and just *Temperament* of all these.

AGAIN in *MUSIC*, says he, would you take away the † *Flat* and the *Sharp*, *Symphony* you can have none; But suit and adapt these rightly together, there arises *Symphony* and *Harmony*.

IN this will *GOD*, who is not the Author of *Discordance* and *Confusion*, but the *Author of Good*, the *Lover of Peace* and *Harmony* in every kind, and most of all in the *Moral* and *Spiritual* World, in doing this will He regard us with his Favor. For better, and more laudable and amiable in his Sight, is he that ruleth his Spirit, than he that taketh a City, and therefore I may properly conclude with this *Epiphonema* in which the Learned will know I allude to a celebrated Passage in a *Classic* Author.

ECCE DIGNUM SPECTACULUM IN QUOD RESPICIAT DEUS OPERI SUO INTENTUS VIR BONUS CUM SUIS IPSIUS AFFECTIBUS COMPOSITUS ATQUE RATIONEM OPTIMUM DEI O. M. DONUM SUO IN LOCO ATQUE DIGNITATE FELICITER CONSERVANS!

* Apud *Stobæum*. † These I believe are the Terms that answer to the τὸ ὀξύ καὶ τὸ βαρὺ of my Author, for after all my Allusions to *Harmony* of Sounds I have not the Happiness to be skill'd in *Music*.



CHAP. VI.

Of Divine Assistances to Men to preserve them from Sin, and advance them to a virtuous Life.

SINCE I undertook to prove the Possibility of obeying the LAW OF GOD with his ASSISTANCE and GRACE, it is time now that I come to speak more directly thereof; and as this is a very momentous and principal Part of my Subject, I shall not need to make any great Apology for the length of this Chapter.

It is a very difficult thing, too much perhaps to expect from any one, that he should use the word GRACE, when he has occasion to speak much of it, in so exact and precise a manner, as to include always the very same Ideas in it without Addition or Diminution; and though PELAGIUS has been blam'd for doing otherwise, yet I humbly conceive St. AUSTIN himself, and every other of the *Fathers* that has treated much on this Subject, will also be found Guilty of this Inaccuracy if they were to be try'd by the same Rule, which indeed is too rigorous and unreasonable to oblige one or other.

If we would speak of the *Goodness*, the *beneficent* Nature of GOD, or the *Effects* of it in general, we may properly call it the GRACE of GOD. I say this with Assurance because I know the *Holy Scripture*

R

calls

calls it so, and that is more than can easily be prov'd of the Sentiment that is now *commonly* convey'd and understood by the word GRACE.

I DO not by this mean to say that the commonly receiv'd Notion and Import of GOD's GRACE is a mistaken or ill-grounded Notion; but I am observing that it is not the *usual* if at all the *scriptural* Import of the Word, which signifies both in the *Old* and *New Testament* (as * learned Divines have well observ'd) *more extensively* the Love and Favor and kind Affection of GOD to Men, without restraining it to any *special Effect* of it.

IF we speak of the *natural Endowments*, and *excellent Talents* GOD has created Man with, we may ascribe *this* to the GRACE of GOD; and so again if we would speak of and celebrate the *common Provisions* that He has made in the *natural Course* of Things for the *acquiring* of any *Excellencies* and the *Improvement* of Mans *natural Faculties*, we may properly apply the *same Word*.

“LIGHT whatever way it may be produc'd (says a Divine that greatly venerated St. *Austin* too) may be called GRACE, especially when it nearly relates to Salvation. It is certain, says he, that *natural Effects* are *complicated*, and *mix'd* a thousand Ways with the *Effects* of GRACE, and that the *Order* of *Nature* strengthens or weakens the *Efficacy* or *Effects* of the *Order* of Grace, according as these two *Orders* variously combine together.”

* Bishop BURNET, Dr. WHITEY, &c.

AGAIN,

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AGAIN, if we speak of the Advantages which *some* part of Mankind had above others by *Revelation of GOD's Will before the Advent of CHRIST*, this was the GRACE OF GOD which appear'd and was vouchsaf'd to them more peculiarly and beyond other Men.

IF we would speak of the Advantages that *Christians* have by the *Remission of their Sins*, as preach'd in the GOSPEL, to their great and endless Comfort, surely this is the GRACE OF GOD; how can Sinners be accepted and thus assur'd of Pardon but by an *Act of Grace*? Not only lesser but greater Sins have the Promise of a Pardon thro' CHRIST upon Mens Repentance and Amendment. But let us not be so ungrateful and vile as to continue in Sin because of this Grace! We are justify'd after we had sinn'd in consideration of the *Passive Obedience* of CHRIST, who dy'd to make Reconciliation for us; and therefore we are justify'd by Grace. I say the *Passive Obedience*, because I look upon the *Melancthonian* Notion, of the *Active Obedience* of CHRIST being imputed to Men, as a mere and indeed as a very strange Fancy.

SHOULD our Subject be the particular Advantages we receive by *Contemplation of the Life of CHRIST*, that perfect Exemplar and Pattern of Obedience, this is an Instance still of GOD's GRACE thro' JESUS CHRIST.

IF lastly we speak of the *illuminating, comfortable, holy Influences of GOD's SPIRIT upon our Hearts through the Mediation of Christ*, whereby we are specially and inwardly assisted to obey GOD's Commands, this also may be called, as it commonly is, the GRACE OF GOD, although it may not be easy, as I said before, to prove that it is so call'd in Scripture.

I SAY therefore that it is too rigorous and unreasonable to demand that we should *constantly* use the Word GRACE in *one determinate and precise Sense*, without the *least* Alteration of any Ideas therein included, unless others in general, or indeed *any one* Writer Orthodox or other, could be shewn to have us'd that *wonderful Accuracy* for a Pattern to us.

BUT without pretending to this, which I really take to be an impossible Thing, I hope to make myself understood. For tho' many of the Antients have talk'd very confusedly about the GRACE OF GOD, yet I am not one of those who would collect from hence, neither shall I give occasion I hope to any to say with a * *French Jesuit*, that GOD's GRACE was a *Je ne sçay Quoy*, insinuating both by that and other Expressions, that no one understood Himself, when he spoke about it.

MY Notion is, that all Men have so far the GRACE and ASSISTANCE of GOD, as that they have Ability to *do his Will*, avoid his Displeasure, and procure Acceptance with him, and *some Degree* of his Favor. What *Degrees* and *Measure* of *Divine Grace* and *Assistance* Men without the Knowledge of CHRIST have enjoy'd, I do not presume precisely to ascertain, I will carry that Enquiry as far as I can, and I think I can carry it far enough to *prove my main Point*, as well as lay a Foundation, upon which every Man of Learning may superstruct both useful and curious Things from his own Reading; I will then pursue the Subject

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to its Height, by briefly asserting the *Evangelical Grace* in the Influences and Illuminations of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT upon the Hearts of CHRISTIANS, suitably to the Powers and Faculties of rational Creatures.

I SHALL begin with, and be somewhat copious in an ENQUIRY into the Sentiments of some of the more eminent and wiser HEATHENS upon the *Main* of this Subject, viz. THE INTERNAL DISPENSATIONS AND ASSISTANCE OF GOD TO MEN, a Speculation not foreign to my Subject, nor as I think of light Importance. For tho' we cannot expect to find any Foot-steps of their believing, that those *Assistances* are convey'd to Men, thro' the *Mediation of Christ*, by the *Agency of the blessed Spirit*, or any other Points of Faith, which by the Help of *Christian Revelation* we join with or apply to the Sentiment above express'd, and which is under our present Consideration, yet if we shall find, that the *Substance* and *main Notion* of GRACE, as it is understood to signify an *inward Assistance* and *Acting of GOD with Men's Minds*, has been *acknowledged* by several of the *wisest Heathens*; and especially if it can be made out withal, that the rest who did not, yet *ought to have acknowledged it*, in Consequence of Principles they knew and held, then we shall be able to obviate from these Considerations the *Objection* some have made, as if *such internal Assistance* of the DEITY to Men, and *Divine Grace* were in the whole Notion of it incongruous to Nature and Reason.

THE practising of *Moral Virtue*, and *Natural Religion*, if our former Arguing was good, would be acceptable

ceptable to GOD, when the Obedience was *sincere* and *constant*, though mixed with some Imperfections. Our *Enquiry* now is how far such Persons as had not the Light of Revelation might *have*, and how far they actually have or have not *acknowledg'd* a *Divine Grace* and *Assistance* towards their *practising* *Virine* and obeying the *Divine Law*.

THE *general* Paternal Care and Provision of GOD for Men in *Regard* to their *chief* and *best* Interests, or in other Words that there is a *general* and *common* Grace of God, this is a Notion obvious by the Light of Nature to all Men that seriously make use of that Light.

SOME of the Antients besides the *Epicureans* may have spoken with a seeming Dubiousness or Hesitancy, as the *Academics* according to the Custom and Character of their Sect, and may for the same Reason and for the sake of arguing have disputed against the commonly received Opinion in *this* as well as *other* Points ; but I suppose that none besides the *Epicureans* did *seriously* and *by their Principle* deny what I scruple not to call in Christian and modern Terms a *common* and *general* Grace of God. For if the *Terms* be modern, I persuade my self the *Idea* and *Sentiment* is far from being so.

AND even as to the Word, GRATIA when apply'd by TULLY under the Person of Cotta an *Academic* to GOD, may relate as well and as much to *this* Kind of his *Beneficence* and *Goodness* as to any other.

Lib. 1. de N. D. prope finem. *Epicurus* verò ex animis hominum extraxit radicibus Religionem cum Dis immortalibus

mortalibus & Opem & Gratiâ sustulit — dum negat esse in Deo Gratiâ, tollit id quod maximè proprium est optimæ præstantissimæque Naturæ — Quod ni ita sit, quid veneramur, quid precamur Deos? — Epicurus ideo re tollit, oratione relinquit Deos. Deinde si maxime talis sit Deus ut nullâ gratiâ, nullâ caritate hominum teneatur, valeat: quid enim dicam, Propitius sit? esse enim propitius potest nemini, quoniam, ut dicitis, omnis in imbecillitate est & Gratia & Caritas.

I MIGHT transcribe from this and many other of the best Authors Abundance of Passages which imply their Belief of GOD's more general Provision for and Paternal Care of Men in respect of their Minds, but it is unnecessary in a Case that I suppose there is no Dispute about. It will be a nicer and more pertinent Enquiry, *Whether any, and which of the wiser and thoughtful Heathens acknowledg'd immediate internal Assistances of the DEITY towards advancing them in Virtue, and in what manner they did acknowledge a Divine Providence in this part.*

BUT before I enter directly upon the matter propos'd, it will be proper to premise some things in order to obviate an Objection that may be thus formed.

IT will be in vain to look for the *Acknowledgment* of God's Grace in *Heathen* Men since they had no Experience of it; they were never like to acknowledge what they never had.

NOW I confess this Difficulty will lie very full in our way, if we take St. *Austin's*, *Prosper's*, and other rigid *Fathers* Words for Gospel, who tell us, that the most boasted Justice, or Chastity, or other
Virtue

Virtue of *Heathens* were not true *Justice* nor true *Charity*, but false and counterfeited; all their Virtues were *Virtutes civiles*, non vera sed verisimiles, nay were only VICES and SPLENDID SINS.

FOR my part I pretend not to pay any deference to the Authority of a St. *Austin*, or any other *Father* when they give themselves the Liberty to dogmatize in such a manner as contradicts our most natural and clear Notions of the Divine Attributes, when they form a Scheme upon which the Providence, the Justice, and the Goodness of GOD cannot be supported; for I see not any Possibility of their being supported and defended by those who shall assert Men to be absolutely incapable in their natural State without the Grace of GOD to do any good Action, and to please GOD, and who do at the same time believe that abundantly the greater Part of Mankind have been and are absolutely excluded from all the Benefit of this Divine Assistance and Grace, a Benefit without which, according to their own Supposition, Men must inevitably perish and be miserable to all Eternity.

BUT the Greek Fathers *Epiphanius*, *Chrysostom*, and others express'd themselves after a much other and more reasonable manner, and CLEMENS ALEXANDRINUS and before Him JUSTIN MARTYR had so different Persuasions of this matter from those above express'd, that they thought SOCRATES and other good Heathens were admitted into Heaven. Now if they did any Actions that were really good and virtuous, and no such can be perform'd without the Grace and Assistance of GOD, we must

of

of consequence allow that they had *this Assistance*, as our venerable BEDE very expressly does ; for in Answer to JULIAN PELAGIUS's Disciple, who argu'd that the *Philosophers* practising *Chastity, Patience, and other Virtues*, must do it in Strength of the Powers that GOD had originally endow'd them with, and not by *special Grace*, since they had not the Knowledge of CHRIST. The Father says, *In quantum veró vel Gustum aliquem Sapientie cujuslibet, vel Virtutis Imaginem habebant, totum hoc desuper acceperunt non solum munere primæ Conditionis verum etiam quotidianam ejus gratiâ*—That so far as there was any the least Tincture of Wisdom and Virtue, they receiv'd all this from above, and not only by the original Gift of their Powers and Faculties, but by GOD's immediately and daily vouchsafed GRACE.

THUS, to descend now to *modern Divines*, and those of our own Church and Nation, Mr. Boys, in his Explication of the xxxix Articles, observes in this Matter on the thirteenth Article, “ That Christ is the true
“ *Light* ; That Christ enlightneth every Man that cometh into the World, John i. v. 9. That his gracious Spirit is not ty'd up to a Party of Men, and
“ debarr'd to all others. He is promised to *Christians*,
“ and may impart his Assistance to *Heathens*, and can
“ display his Power to *Balaam*, to *Sybil*, to whom and
“ where He pleases. And tho' we *Christians* have most
“ of his Assistance ensur'd to us, and may depend on
“ him upon our Improvements for more Grace, yet
“ without injuring Him, we may believe, that he is
“ ready to encourage all that bear the Image of GOD

“ *and do not slight his Motions*: And the Difference
 “ that is seen amongst the *Heathens*, and the *moral Virtues*
 “ that are found in them (if truly good) are effected
 “ by Him who breaths into them a Measure of the
 “ Spirit of Righteousness, and by *inward Impulses* stirs
 “ *them up and enables them to be good*. — If mere
 “ *Heathens*, transported by some *Illapses of the Spirit*,
 “ could do well (as some think they did) how much
 “ more may we do better being under the *constant As-*
 “ *sistances and Guidance* of it!

To the same Purpose Mr. *Nelson*, late *Prebendary*
 of *Ripon*, in his Volume of posthumous Sermons, p. 71.
 speaking of the *Patriarchal Dispensation*, he says, “ That
 “ Men in those Ages were left to the common and or-
 “ dinary Revelation which GOD makes of Himself
 “ in one Degree or other to every Soul, *i. e.* to those
 “ innate Notions of a DEITY, of Good and Evil,
 “ of just and unjust, which are commonly call’d and
 “ thought to be the Light of Nature, or natural Re-
 “ ligion, but are in Truth the *Light of GOD*, shi-
 “ ning in the Souls of Men, and Part of that *prevent-*
 “ *ing Grace*, which was merited by CHRIST for, and
 “ communicated to *Adam*, and to all Mankind in
 “ Him.

THUS *Archbishop TILLOTSON* says, “ That the
 “ SPIRIT OF GOD was given to Men in *all Ages*,
 “ from the Beginning of the World, if we mean the
 “ *common and transient* Operations of GOD’s Spirit
 “ upon the Minds of Men, exciting and disposing
 “ them to that which is good; but the *Residence*, the
 “ *permanent*

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“ *permanent* Influence and Conduct of GOD’s *holy*
 “ *Spirit*, as a *constant* Principle of spiritual Life and
 “ Activity, he supposes *peculiar* to good *Christians*.”
 See Vol. 14. p. 90.

AGAIN, he allows, p. 124, That Men are said to learn of the *Father*, and to be drawn by him, by the Dispositions which were wrought in them (whilst they had not receiv’d the Christian Religion) by that Sense of Good and Evil which they have by the Law of Nature.

I KNOW it was thought an improper Expression in the *Pelagian Age*, that *Men went to Heaven by the Law as well as by the Gospel*, quod Lex mittat ad Regnum sicut & Evangelium; the Word [*sicut*] indeed may bear some *Criticizing* upon it; and if any shall assert that the *Law of GOD* under the *Mosaical Oeconomy* sent Men *with perfect Equality* as the *Gospel* does to Heaven, I should call to Mind what our Saviour says, that in his *Father’s House* are many *Mansions*, and believe they were in an Error. For the rest I look upon it as importing the same Sense with a Passage I shall transcribe from JUSTIN MARTYR, which has had better Luck I think than to have been censur’d as *Heretical* or so much as *Heterodox*: It is in his Dialogue with *Trypho*, who having ask’d directly, Whether or no they who liv’d well under the Law should rise again to Life? The Father answers, That *they will be saved, since they did under that Dispensation both such things as were naturally pious, just, and good, and also such things as were particularly prescrib’d to that People for the Hard-*

ness of their Hearts. For says he again, * THEY WHO DO SUCH THINGS AS ARE UNIVERSALLY, NATURALLY, AND ETERNALLY GOOD AND RIGHT, DO PLEASE GOD, AND SHALL, even with *Noe* and *Enoch*, BE SAVED TOGETHER WITH THOSE WHO HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.

HE was only speaking here of those I confess who liv'd under *the Law of Moses*, but that which is said with particular and immediate View to them may be extended to those who practis'd moral Virtue and Piety without any reveal'd Law, which tho' I do not collect it as certain, but only as probable from this Passage, was plainly the Sentiment of *this Father*, unless † Men of the greatest Character for *Learning* and *Ingenuity*, and who differ'd too in Opinion from him have been greatly mistaken. And yet we may certainly contemplate, and that with much Pleasure and Thankfulness, *the common gracious Provisions of GOD* for ALL Men, without overlooking those extraordinary and peculiar ones which we CHRISTIANS have the Advantage of. For

To suppose that they who had no *explicit Knowledge* of CHRIST, whether they were *under the Law* or *without the Law*, may yet be saved or obtain Acceptance with GOD, being obedient to his Law imprinted on their

* Pag. 130. Edit. Jebb. Ἐπεὶ οἱ τὰ καθόλου καὶ φύσει καὶ αἰώνια καλὰ ἔποιον, ἐνάρξεσσι ἔισι τῷ Θεῷ καὶ διὰ τοῦ Χριστοῦ τῆτι ἐν τῇ ἀνταστάσει ΟΜΟΙΩΣ τοῖς προηγουμένοις ἀνθρώποις Δ. καί τοις Νῶε καὶ Ἐνῶχ καὶ Ἰακώβ, καὶ ἕτι τινες ἄλλοι γενναῖοι, ἀποδήπνῃσι σὺν τοῖς ἐπιγινώσκοντι τὸν Χριστόν. † Casaubon. Vossius.

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Hearts, and doing things naturally and immutably good and right; this is no Disparagement to the *Merits of our SAVIOUR*, if it be withal suppos'd that they are PARTAKERS OF HIS GRACE, and *accepted of GOD THROUGH HIM*.

THERE IS ONE GOD, “ who is (to give it in “ Dr. *Whitby's* Paraphrase) the GOD of the *Gentiles* “ as well as of the *Jews*, the FATHER, the LORD, “ the SAVIOUR of ALL Men,” and ONE MEDIA-TOR *betwixt GOD and Man, the Man CHRIST JE-SUS*, 1 *Tim.* ii. 5. and the Doctor's Note upon this Place, which is too long to be inserted, does agree with and confirm what I am contending for.

HIS Argument is built in Part upon this Founda-tion, that JESUS CHRIST, as *Man*, was most certain-ly endu'd with *all the best Qualities belonging to human Nature*, and therefore in particular with the *most ex-tensivè Compassion and Benevolence for ALL Men*; to which I shall only add, that CHRIST having besides the *human*, a Nature which is *infinitely more* good and gracious, more merciful and benign than *Man*, would no doubt *extend Help and Salvation* to ALL Men of every Nation, who seriously aim'd to please GOD, so that they whose Consciences could excuse them, answering that they had obey'd GOD's *Law* writ-ten in their Hearts, shall be accepted by GOD through HIM.

“ No Man says † Archbishop TILLOTSON shall “ be able at the Day of Judgment to plead *Want of*

* Vol. 14. p. 138.

" Power to have done his Duty. For GOD will judge
 " the World in Righteousness, and then I am sure he will
 " condemn no Man for not having done that which
 " was impossible for him to do. GOD has done
 " enough for every Man to leave him without Excuse.
 " St. PAUL tells us, that the [* Blind] Heathens shall
 " have no Apology to make for themselves. Next
 " to the Being of GOD and his Goodness and Justice
 " I do as verily believe it, as I do any thing in the
 " World, that no Man shall be able to say to GOD
 " at the Great Day, Lord, I would have repented of
 " my Sins, and obey'd thy Laws, but I wanted Pow-
 " er to do it. I was left destitute of the Grace which
 " was necessary to the Performance and Discharge of
 " my Duty.

THE immediate internal Acting of GOD upon Mens
 Minds has been attempted to be demonstrated necessary
 to Mens being virtuous and good upon mere Principles
 of Reason.

VIRTUE it is † argu'd is the Image of God in a ra-
 tional Soul, which cannot be there imprinted without
 the Presence of the great Exemplar God himself; that the
 Mind cannot do or see any thing that is right and
 beautiful, but as it is illuminated with the eternal and
 only true and real Light of GOD. GOD only can

* By Blind he must mean a comparative Blindness only or less De-
 gree of Light than Christians have; for if any were Blind abso-
 lutely whether Jews or Gentiles, they would have an Apology to
 make, and would not have had Sin or Punishment.

† To this Effect Mr. POIRET.

present

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present this Light unto the Soul, since this Light is inseparable from GOD, and is indeed GOD himself. It is impossible for Man to produce the *infinite Object* which is the true Light, the true Goodness and Happiness. The *Eternal, Infinite and Perfect Object* cannot be produc'd by a *temporal Finite and Imperfect Subject*, and therefore to Man's Virtue and Goodness and Happiness it is necessary that this *Infinite Object* and Source of all Good do *present itself*; or in other Words, that *GOD should internally Act upon the Soul by his Grace.* Q. E. D.

Now if this be *indeed a Demonstration*, it is plain withal that Men might discover this Truth *without a Revelation.* I confess the *Weight and Force* of this Ratiocination is not the greater for its *metaphysical Subtily* (for the clearest Arguments have the greatest Strength) but leaving it to have that *Degree of Influence and Weight it may justly claim*, it is certain that *Pagans* did many of them discover the said Truth, and *one of them* grounds his Belief of it upon a like Argument, as will appear in the Sequel.

Now to say almost in any matter of Enquiry, *The Heathens believed this or that*, seems to me to be too general, and indeed a crude and inaccurate Expression, and manner of Discussion, especially if it be in a Point of a nice and intricate Nature; and I have wonder'd to see such general Expressions, which cut the Matter so short, and determine it so peremptorily in this present Case, in *two of our Divines of eminent Character for their Learning and Judgment*; as if the producing
of

of two or three Instances was a sufficient Induction of Particulars to make such a Conclusion.

WE may well overlook, or at least if there be any Occasion to speak of them, gently touch Inaccuracies in such Authors as have oblig'd the World with Works of great Piety and Learnings, that are and ought to be in great Esteem; in which Class are without Dispute the Authors I mean, viz. Dr. SHERLOCK, late Dean of St. Paul's, and Dr. WHITBY, upon a Passage of either of whose Writings if I pretend to criticize, it is without the least Disrespect to their Name or Memory.

" I AM sure, says the former, that *Heathens* themselves called *Virtue the Gift of GOD*, and ascrib'd all extraordinary Excellencies and Perfections of Men, to the *secret Influences and Assistances* of their *GODS*.

THE latter says, " That the *Heathens* acknowledge an *absolute Need of a Divine Afflatus*, or good assisting *Genius* to preserve them from Sin, and to advance them to a virtuous Life.

IN confirmation of so considerable an Assertion it is odd to see only three Citations, one from *Iamblichus* to this Purpose, *That no one can happily imitate the Divine Perfections without a GOD or good Spirit to assist him*, Εἰ μὴ τῷ τοιαύτῳ δαίμονι χρῆσαιτο. Another is from *Maximus Tyrinus*, who says, *That good Men want God to aid and co-operate with them*, Δείοναι συναγωνισῆθαι τῷ συλλήπῳ, and the third is out of *TULLY's* second Book *de Nat. Deor.* near the End, *That the*
great

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great Men both amongst the Greeks and Romans were such by a Divine Assistance, juvante Deo, and that there never was a great Man without this Divine Afflatus—
Nemo igitur vir magnus sine aliquo afflatu Divino unquam fuit.

Now as the main Stress of what they plead is rested upon that Passage quoted by them from TULLY's second Book *de Nat. Deor.* and as he is an Author of the *first Figure*, and for whom I have a peculiar Respect, I have examin'd not uncarefully into his Sentiment, and wish'd to have had so *great a Name* on the Side for which I am arguing, his Opinion being by no Means fix'd or at all discoverable from *this Passage*, because the Words are not spoken as in his own Person, but put into the Mouth of a *Stoic*, suitably without any question to the *Principle* and *Character* of a *Stoic* as will be shewn in the Sequel.

IT does not at all follow that TULLY deny'd such a *Divine Internal Providence* as we are speaking of, because He has represented *Cotta*, one of his own Sect an *Academic*, as arguing against a *Divine Providence* in general from this Topic, that there is no Sign or Evidence of a *Providence* in relation to Man's *chiefest Interests* and his *mental Powers*. This cannot be from hence concluded I say, because it was the known manner of the *Academic* Sect to oppose any *Dogma* by way of *Argumentation*, and in that Opposition to use not only Arguments they look'd upon as *certain and solid Truths*, but any that were *plausible Topics*, as *Cotta* says in the Conclusion of this very Discourse.

T

Ego

Ego verò & opto redargui me, Balbe, & ea quæ disputavi differere malui quàm judicare, & faciliè me à te vinci posse certo scio—I desire *Balbus* (says he) to be refuted, and those things which I have oppos'd, I offer'd by way of *Problem* and *Disputation*, rather than as my settled Opinion and Judgment; and I am very well satisfy'd that you are able to confute me. And *TULLY* ends that Book with saying that *Velleius* the *Epicurean* thought indeed that *Cotta* had the better of the Argument, but that for his own part, he thought that what *Balbus* had said (who was the *Asserter* of *Divine Providence*) had a greater Appearance of Truth and Reason than *Cotta's* Objections. *Hæc cum essent dicta, ita discessimus ut Velleio Cotta disputatio verior, mihi Balbi ad veritatis similitudinem videretur esse propensior.* And indeed the Argument I am now speaking of that is urg'd against such a *Providence* as we are here establishing, is a very mean one, wholly built upon the Supposition that *virtuous Endeavors* in Men, and the *Divine Assistance* to them were absolutely incompatible with one another; and it is back'd with a very false Assertion, that all Mankind agreed in thinking so, and that never any Man attributed his being *Wise* or *Virtuous* to the *Assistance* of *GOD*, or thanked *GOD* for it.

* *Virtutem nemo unquam acceptam Deo retulit. Nimirum rectè: propter virtutem enim jure laudamur, & in virtute rectè gloriamur, quod non contingeret si id Donum*

a Deo, non a nobis haberemus. At verò aut honoribus aucti, aut re familiari, aut si aliud quippiam nacti sumus fortuiti boni aut depulimus mali, cum Dis gratias agimus, tum nihil nostræ laudi assumptum arbitramur. Num quis quod vir bonus esset gratias Dis egit unquam? At quod dives, quod honoratus, quod incolumis. Fovemque Optimum & Maximum ob eas res appellant, non quod nos justos, temperantes, sapientes efficiat, sed quod salvos, incolumes, opulentos, copiosos. Neque Herculi Decumam quisquam vovit unquam, si sapiens factus esset—Judicium hoc omnium Mortalium est, Fortunam a Deo petendam, a seipso sumendam esse Sapientiam.

THE Reason of the thing was just the contrary. It is a good Argument, and obvious enough to natural Reason upon the Experience and Evidence of things, that GOD does take care of our Bodies and Bodily Concerns, and therefore it may be presum'd He would not leave us without his Paternal Care and Assistance in regard to our Minds and Principal Interests.

ALL Mankind, even without the Supposition of a Revelation, ought to acknowledge themselves beholden to the SUPREME BEING on the account of every thing they find Good, whether it regard the Body or the Mind; whether temporal Felicities, or virtuous Principles and Habits, together with Acts of Virtue issuing from them. If therefore the Heathens did commonly make full and explicit Acknowledgment of the former, that their Plenty of Corn and Fruits, and all kind of External Prosperity was certainly to be attributed to PROVIDENCE, and if all Men in general, according to

that Passage in TULLY in the Book and Place * before referr'd to, conceiv'd themselves obliged to return their Thanks to the DEITY on *these Accounts*, then why not as well upon the *other Account* also in Regard to *Wisdom* or *Virtue*, since there is no Difficulty or Objection considerable against the *later*, as I take it, but what affects the *former* too? They knew *e. g.* that they acquir'd *Wealth* and *Honour* through their *own Pains* and *prudent Management*; and yet they saw that Piety requir'd they should withal acknowledge the *concurring Assistance of God*, so that all their Acquisitions, notwithstanding their own Schemes and industrious Prosecution of them, were to be look'd upon as the † GIFT OF GOD. Why should they not then in like manner reason, that notwithstanding in *every Virtuous Action* they were conscious of a *Freedom* of Will to choose and purpose it, and perhaps a great deal of *laudable Pains* to prosecute and accomplish it, yet it might be reasonable in them to account *this* too as the *Gift of God*; since it was GOD that both *gave* them *originally* and *preserv'd* to them the *Powers* and *Faculties* whereby they might be able to choose Good and refuse Evil; and also that furnish'd them *continually* with *proper* and *weighty Inducements* thereto?

* De N. D. p. 334. Atque hoc quidem omnes Mortales sic habent; externas commoditates, vineta, segetes, oliveta, ubertatem frugum & fructuum, omnem denique commoditatem prosperitatemque Vitæ a Dis se habere.

† See that Passage from TULLY above quoted — Cum Dis gratias agimus, tum nihil nostræ laudi assumptum arbitramur.

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IT was therefore *equally* (if not *more*) reasonable for them to pray to the *Supreme Being* for the continual Preservation of their Powers and Faculties, and for supplying them with Inducements to a *virtuous* and *good Exercise* of them, as it was to pray for *Health*, for *Riches*, or *any external Commodities* whatever.

AND even as to more *extraordinary Assurances* to Good by GOD's *special Intervention*, they had at least equal Foundation in Reason to hope and pray for them in *particular Exigencies*, as they could have to expect the *special* and *immediate* Interposition of *Divine Power* in particular Exigencies, in regard to corporal Deliverances.

TO what has been already said I shall take leave to add a corroborating Passage and Argument out of a late Book of Dr. Fiddes.

“ IT is, says he, in a human way of Reasoning
 “ *more probable* that GOD should by a *particular Do-*
 “ *nation* or *Will* confer on Man the *Grace* in what-
 “ ever degree necessary to a Conduct truly virtuous,
 “ than that He should give to him such a Power of
 “ regulating his Moral Behaviour as might be *wholly*
 “ *arbitrary and independent*; since by this means the
 “ *natural Pride* of Man, the most common Source of
 “ Corruption in him, would not only be kept under
 “ a continual Restraint from a Sense of his own Im-
 “ becillity, but the Apprehension that GOD's *Assist-*
 “ *ance* is always necessary to him in the Discharge of
 “ his Duty, would render him at once more cautious
 “ of provoking GOD to withdraw it, and excite him
 “ under all the more difficult Trials of his Obedience
 “ by

“ by *Prayer* and *Supplication* with *Thanksgiving* to make
 “ known his Requests to GOD.

WHEN therefore TULLY under the Person of *Cotta* speaks so well and honourably of *Prayer*, and is so much offended at EPICURUS for vacating it in effect by the Consequences of his pernicious Doctrine, and when he rightly resolves the Success of Prayers into the *Grace* or *Beneficent Nature* of GOD, seeing that *Beneficent Nature* will incline him to do greater as well as lesser Acts of Good to Men. He ought, if he had reason'd justly, to have acknowledg'd such a *Grace* of GOD as produc'd special Divine Assurances in favor of good Men, not only in regard to their external Circumstances but internal upon their Minds.

AND there is indeed a Passage or two of his in his *Tusculan Disputations*, which at first sight appear to assert or imply God's special Assistance to and Operation in Men, as p. 55. *Mihi verò ne hæc quidem notiora carere vi divinâ videntur; ut Ego haud Poetam grave plenamque carmen sine cœlesti aliquo Mentis instinctu putem fundere, aut Eloquentiam sine majore vi quâdam fluere—* then speaking of Philosophy he calls it with PLATO the Invention of the Gods, and says — *Prorsus hæc Divina mihi videtur vis quæ tot res efficiat & tantas.—*

BUT if we rightly consider this whole Passage we shall perceive that TULLY by *Vis Divina* in these Places does not mean nor think of any special Assistance and Operation of the Deity, but the *Excellent and God-like Nature* of the Soul it self, which he is there amply setting off, and quotes *Euripides*, as he might also *Plato* and others, for calling the human Mind a God,

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[*ὅς ἀνθρώπων Θεός*] * So that the whole Argument and Connection leads us to understand his *Vis Divina* of an *Original Native Power of the human Soul* and a proper Motion of her own. And still it must be allow'd, that when he represents in another Place his Brother *Quintus*, who was a *Stoic*, as using the same Phrase in regard both to Poets and Orators † — *illa concitatio declarat vim in animis esse divinam*,— he is to be understood of an *adventitious Impulse*, as we may easily collect both from his general Principle and the Particulars of that Place and Argument.

HE says in his Book *de Divinat.* in his own Person, that the *Interposition* of the DEITY would be better, and *more suitably to the Divine Benevolence*, vouchsaf'd to Persons *awake* than in *Dreams*, but that *latter* sort of Interposition was not known or true in Fact, and therefore neither the former. *Fuit igitur divinâ beneficiâ dignius quum consulerent nobis clariora visa dare vigilantibus quam obscuriora per somnium, quod quoniam non fit, somnia divina putanda non sunt.* He seems indeed to say the Truth, though I could have been glad to have thought otherwise, to be constant to this Sentiment ||

* Vid. Davif. in loc. & in Lib. 1. de Divin. p. 97. † Ibid.

|| I am sensible that all I have here said is not of direct and great Importance to my main Design. If I love to pursue a Thought in order to be more exact, yet I do not ordinarily indulge my self in leading the Reader thro' all the Particulars of the Chase. I may hope therefore that if there be here something of Digression or a Redundancy it may be the more easily excused by the Reader that will do me the Justice to believe I have in the general taken Pains to bring my Arguments into a short Compass, and have omitted many things that I thought were but remotely pertinent to my Argument and main Design.

that

that the Human Mind being originally form'd with a sufficient Principle of Action on all Emergencies, acts without the Help of any adventitious Impulse, always with its own proper and sole Motion, *Nullo Adventitio Impulſu, ſed ſuo Motu*, Libr. de Divinat. p. 287.

So that upon the whole, inſtead of that Paſſage taken out of TULLY's Works, *Nemo Vir magnus ſine aliquo Afflatu divino unquam fuit*, inſtead of making this and the reſt of the Argument in that Context the main Foundation of ſo general an Aſſertion, the Learned Doct'rs I had occaſion to cite upon this Matter, would have done better to have obſerv'd, that as many of the *Heathens* did aſcribe extraordinary Excellencies of Men to divine Aſſiſtances, and did acknowledge the Need thereof in Reſpect of *Wiſdom* and *Virtue*; ſo likewiſe that the Principles upon which the wiſer Sort of them did acknowledge any Dependance upon GOD, would if rightly purſu'd, have inferr'd and perſuaded ſuch a Dependance, ſuch an Opinion and Belief as we have been ſpeaking of, whether they did all of them actually ſo reaſon and believe or not.

THE fore-cited Commentator on TULLY produces Paſſages by which it appears that * PLATO, DE-

* It may be that ſome of our Calviniſtical Divines may differ with me when I hint a little below that theſe are amongſt the Inſtances that carry things too far; for I remember that Dr. South, who was one of them, and a Man of Wit without diſpute, obſerves in one of his Sermons, that all Wit and ingenious Conceits are thus adventitious, and even that they may be diſcern'd to be ſo by their Flaſhes, or the ſudden manner of their darting like Light'ning into the Soul.

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MOCRITUS and PINDAR asserted a good Poet to be mov'd by an extraordinary and adventitious Impulse, to be out of himself—to write by Inspiration and a sacred Spirit. Pind. Θεομῆγες—ἀγαθοὶ καὶ σοφοὶ κατὰ δαίμον' ἀνδρες. Plato ἴσθ' ὅτι τῶν μὲν—ἐν θεῷ τε καὶ ἔκθεον. Dem. Μετ' ἐδυσίασμεν καὶ ἰσθ' ἀνέμματος. And so Tully (pro Archia) quasi divino quodam Spiritu inflati, giving not his own but the Opinion of many great and learned Men.

It becomes well enough the Sect and Character of his Brother Quintus what TULLY has represented him saying, [de Div. p. 47, and p. 136.] *That Persons who interpret Dreams, Oracles, Verses spoke and made by Inspiration, do come near to their Spirit of Divination, as Grammarians or Critics do to that of Poets; in which he had his Eye probably upon that Passage of PLATO (which is produc'd by Davies in locum) wherein Socrates is represented to say, That it is not from Art that a Man explains and comments well upon Homer, but it is a divine Power that moves him and enables him so to do: For that as the Loadstone does so impregnate Steel as to make it have a Magnetic Power in moving other Pieces of Steel, so the Muse inspires Men with a divine Afflatus, and by these a Succession of Men divinely inspir'd is carry'd on.* Thus we see SOCRATES or rather PLATO, not only acknowledges but very widely extends the special Operation and Inspiration of the DEITY: And this the Poets acknowledge, and particularly Homer does so (as Tully observes in the Person of Balbus the Stoic in fine L. 2. de N. D.) when he gives his Heroes some Deity or other for their Guides and Assistants.

U

IT

IT was the Opinion not only of the *Stoics*, but a very common Opinion amongst *Greeks*, *Romans*, and other *Gentiles*, that particular Men were by one or other sort of *Omens* forewarn'd by the *GODS* of *improsperous Events*, that so they might avoid them, as well as foretold of *happy* ones. But King *Deiotarus* it seems made use of *Auguries* and *Divinations* for the knowing of what he should do or omit in regard to *Virtue* and *Honour*. *Virtutis auspiciis video usum Deiotarum quæ vetat spectare Fortunam dum præstetur fides--quippe eas aves quibus autoribus officium & fidem secutus esset bene sibi consuluisse reputavit.* Vid. Tull. de Div. p. 38 & 230.

THE Instances that *Plutarch* gives, of *Homer's* representing Deities giving Assurances of this Nature to Men, are these,

Τῷ δ' αἶψ' ἐπὶ φρεσὶ δῖκα θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη.

Illi suggestit rem oculos Dea cæcia Pallas.

And again this,

*Ητοι οἰσάμενος ἢ καὶ θεὸς ὥς ἐκέλευσε.

Vel meditata facit vel sic Deus omnia jussit.

For, the third which he mentions,

Ἀλλὰ τίς ἀθανάτων τρέφε φρένας, ὅς γ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ
Δῆμον δῖκα φέειν.

*Ast aliquis mentem populo Deus abstulit, ut qui
Pectoribus famam inseruit.*

THIS Instance, I say, like abundance more of the same Poets, represents the *Divinity* as acting just the *Reverse* of giving internal Assurances to the Souls of Men.

I CON-

I CONFESS we might easily be led to conceive an Expectation, of meeting with *more of the assistant and kindly Influences* from *Jupiter*, to whom the Poet gives so frequently the Epithet of Μητίετ; but it may be judg'd whether or no such an Expectation would not be disappointed, and whether any thing of that Nature can be collected from the said Epithet by the following Line towards the end of *Il. η.*

Παννυχὸς δ' ἐσφιν κακὰ μύθετο μνητίετα Ζεὺς,
All Night did Counsel-giving Jove
Mischief contrive against them ———

PLUTARCH is solicitous indeed to make *Homer* say these things very consistently with the Belief of Mens *Freedom of Will* and their own *real Agency*. He says for him, that some had censur'd him as thus derogating from the Freeness of human Actions, which says he *Homer* does not do, for he speaks in several places agreeably to the Belief of Man's *Free-will* Τὰ μὲν εἰκότα καὶ συνήθη κατὰ λόγον περιγινόμενα τῷ ἐφ' ἡμῶν ἀποδίδουσι, καὶ λέγει δὴτε πολλάκις,

Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ βέβλευσα κατὰ μεγαλήτορα θυμόν.
 ——— ἐν δ' ἐοῖ ἦτορ

Στήθεσσι λαοίοισι διάνδιχα μερμήριζεν.

OUR Poet I dare say was never in any Pain about the Matter, and these Pains of *Plutarch* in his behalf will by no means be sufficient to vindicate him in many of the things he has said of this Nature, and which will be taken Notice of in the *Appendix*.

IT would have been I think a much better Instance what *Hector* says to *Ajax*, *Il. η. L. 288*.

Αἶαν ἐπεί τοι δῶκε θεὸς μέγας τε βίην τε,
 καὶ πινυτήν ———

* ——— *Valiant Greek, thy Virtues,
Thy Strength, thy Courage, and thy Skill in Counsel,
All lent thee by the Gods are well approv'd.*

And thus in Mr. Pope's Translation,

*Oh first of Greeks! ———
Whom Heav'n adorns superior to thy kind,
With Strength of Body and with worth of Mind!
Or that of Minerva in Il. B. L. 36.*

Εὐάνδ' ὁ Ἀργείοις ἐποδυσόμεν' ἦτορ ἀνύπτ.

But let us aid the Greeks with wholsom Counsels.

THIS latter probably relates to nothing more but the Management of the War, but the former I think I ought to except out of the Remark I am going to make soon, and it may be reckon'd of the Nature of those Instances which are most pertinent to our present Point.

ONAP *ἐκ Διὸς* was a very ancient Notion and much receiv'd, though ARISTOTLE it seems would not acknowledge it as true, i. e. that *Dreams* were oftentimes, and especially after performing preparatory and proper *Rites, sent to Men by God*, for some particular Ends and Purposes commonly *advantageous* to the Dreamer.

LAW-GIVERS as † NUMA and others pretended to an *immediate Divine Assistance* in forming their *Laws*.
“ And the *Heaven Philosophers* in JULIAN'S Time
“ and Court (says the learned Dr. BENTLEY) pre-
“ tended to more *Impulses, Inspirations, Revelations* and
“ *Commerce* with the DEITY than *Christians* could tru-

* Mr. Ozell's Edition.

† Plutarch Livy relate it.

“ly do. They had *Dreams, Visions, and extatic Colloquies* with *Demons*, and JULIAN himself had innumerable Communications with his favorite God *Mithras*.

THUS *Laertius, Suidas* and *Cicero* say (which I give upon *Neander's* Credit) that the *Pythagorean* celebrated ΑΤΤΟΣ ΕΦΑ imported not that *PYTHAGORAS* said so, at least *not barely* that he said it, but that an *Oracle* or *GOD* did communicate the Knowledge of it; which, though we should suppose it together with *SOCRATES'S GENIUS* to have been *false Pretences*, yet shew their Opinions, that the most useful Knowledge to the begetting *Virtue* was the GIFT OF THE DEITY.

I HAVE in these Instances been giving Proofs of *Heathens* acknowledging a *special Divine Operation* and *Assistance*, which I conceive do carry the thing too far, or have a good deal of *Error, Fraud* or *Weakness* mix'd with them.

WE will proceed now to *other* Proofs and Arguments which I think may have a *greater Stress* laid upon them.

AND first I produce *PYTHAGORAS'S* Precept in his golden Verses, *That Men when they set about a good Work, should pray to the Gods, that by their Assistance it may be happily accomplish'd;*

— “Ερχεσθαι ἐπὶ τὸν θεόν
θεοῖσιν ἐπιβοῶμεν & τελείσαι.

for thus his Commentator *HIEROCLES* explains him.

THIS Precept, says he, comprehends in short all that is necessary to the Attainment of what is good, the

the *Mind's own proper Motion and Impulse*, and the *Divine Co-operation and Assistance*. It becomes therefore those that set about the Work of *Virtue*, to join their Prayers to *Heaven*, and it becomes those that pray to use withal their *diligent Labor and Endeavors*.

Πάντα τὰ πρὸς τὴν κλῆσιν τῶν ἀγαθῶν διὰ βραχίων ὑπέρβηται ὁ λόγος, τὸ τῆς ψυχῆς αὐτοκίνητον, καὶ τὴν τοῦ Θεοῦ συνέργειαν. — Σπένδοντας ἔν πρὸς τὴν ἐνεργον ἀρετὴν εὐχεσθαι προσήκει, καὶ εὐχομένους τὴν κτῆσιν ταύτης ἐργάζεσθαι.

IN the same Place we may find more to the same Purpose, very accurately and beautifully express'd, nor should we imagine they were the Words of a *Heathen* were they to be cited without the Mention of any Name or Remark upon them; for how *Pious* and *Christian* is the Sentiment when he observes, That we must not aim at good and vertuous things, as conceiving that we are able to attain them *of ourselves without the Help of GOD*, neither should we content ourselves with *mere Prayer* without adding our Labor to obtain what we pray for ! For this implies on the one Hand, *viz.* if we should omit Prayer, that we might be good *without Divine Assistance*, that we might have, says he, an *Atheous or Godless Virtue*, which implies a Contradiction, and destroys the very Nature of Virtue. Or on the other hand, in case we should only make use of *Prayers without our Endeavors* for what is virtuous and good, this would evidently render our Prayers *un- efficacious and vain*, as they are indeed *absurd and insincere*.

SUCH

DIVINE PROVIDENCE. 151

SUCH kind of *idle Prayers* without our Endeavors *Sallust* also under the Person of *Cato* observes, are ineffectual to procure Divine Assistance, which implies that *sincere Prayers* join'd with Endeavors *have that Effect*.

Cunctamini videlicet Dis immortalibus confisi qui hanc Rempublicam in maximis saepe periculis servavere. Non votis neque suppliciis muliebribus auxilia Deorum parantur, vigilando, agendo, bene consulendo prosperè omnia cedunt: ubi socordia tete atque ignavia tradideris, nequicquam Deos implores, irati infestique sunt.

THE Excellent Author I have often quoted *HIEROCLES* speaking of irrational brute Animals, and a fortuitous Arrival of things respecting them, has this remarkable Passage to our present Purpose: “ For they, “ says he, did not come into this World from *Ethereal Places* to be formed by a Divine Discipline towards a Return to those Regions again, which is “ the Case of Men, whose rational and immortal Souls “ coming down from thence into this World must “ needs be assisted by the kind and officious Care of “ those *Ethereal kindred Spirits* towards their *Elevation* and getting clear of their Pollution and vicious Propensions.

NOW if we do but abstract from this the *Platonic Peculiarity*, of the Soul descending from higher Regions for some Fault, and to be punish'd and purify'd here, if we will but overlook here this Sentiment which indeed runs thro' the whole of this Piece, it will for the rest be a Passage not unworthy of our *Christian Divines* who acknowledge and assert that *GOD administers*

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NATURE, LAW, and GRACE it self or at least MANY MEANS OF GRACE, by the Mediation of Angels in Subordination to the Government of CHRIST; and parallel Passage in particular to one of Archbishop Tillotson's in his Sermon on the *Easiness of the Christian Precepts*, where he says—Are there Legions of Devils who are continually designing and working our Ruin? There are also *Myriads of good Angels* who are more chearful and officious to do us good. For I doubt not, but as those who are bent to do wickedly, will never want *Tempters* to urge them on and to push them forward in an *evil Course*; so on the other hand those who apply themselves seriously to the Business of Religion, and yield themselves tractable to good Motions will find the *good Spirit of God* more ready and active to encourage them, than the *Devil* can be to pull them back; unless we think that GOD has given a greater Power and a larger Commission to the *Devil to do Men Mischief*, than to his *holy Spirit and his holy Angels for our Assistance and Encouragement*. —

THE Words of *Hierocles* are these near the End of his Book on *Providence and Fate*,

Οὐ γὰρ ἐπέσθηδ' ἡ ἐν ἐκείνοις ἐν τῷ αἰθερίῳ τόπῳ τὴν ὑπόστασιν ποιησάμενον, ἵνα καὶ τῇ θεῖᾳ κρίσει παιδαγωγηθῇ πρὸς ἐπάνοδον, ὡς ἐν τοῖς κατ' ἑκάστῃ ἀνθρώποις τὰς λογικὰς καὶ ἀθάνατους ψυχὰς ἐκείθεν καλίστους ἀνάγκη πλεῖστον ὁπσιγεφῆς καὶ κηδεμονίας λόγον πυγχανῆν ὧσα συνηνῶν πρὸς ἀνόρθωσιν τῆς εἰς καλίαν ὑποφορῆς.

I BELIEVE I shall not lead my Reader into an Error, if I say that *Xenophon* relates of *Cyrus*, that he exhorted his Soldiers to begin every thing whether it were

of

of greater or lesser Moment by Religious Addresses to the Deity, or if I say that the antient Poet *Æschylus* was not a stranger to this Notion, that *God will help a Man who endeavors well*, though I cannot recite the direct Words of one, nor indeed quote either of them with the *Exactness* that I love to use where I have the Opportunity; however the Words of the Poet I believe are thus, ὅταν σπῶδῃ τις αὐτὸς καὶ Θεὸς συνάπτεται.

THAT Passage of *Pliny* in his *Panegyric* is not foreign to our Purpose, *A Dis enim exordium est in omnibus precatationibus quod nihil rite nihilque providemèr homines sine Deorum immortalium ope, consilio, honore auspicentur*, parallel to which is that of *Aristides the Sophist*, as I find it in *Neander's γρηγορολόγιον*.

Απὸ τούτου ἀρχομεν καὶ τελευτοῦμεν, εἰς τὸν παντὶς λόγον καὶ πάσι πρῶτον καὶ ἑσχατον ἐκκαλεσάμενοι, *We ought to begin and end with GOD, invoking his Aid and Guidance in every thing.*

JUPITER gives Men *Virtue* says *Homer*,

Ζεὺς δ' ἀρετὴν ἀνδράσιν ὀφείλει—

where the Word I translate *Virtue* is indeed somewhat ambiguous, and may possibly signify only *Bravery in Battle*, and one or two of the Passages I have above produc'd may also be thought not altogether so close to the Point of inward Assistances to *Virtue*; but that can hardly be objected to what I am going to cite from *Callimachus* in his *Hymn to Jupiter*.

— δίδε δ' ΑΡΕΤΗΝ τε καὶ ὄλβον.

— Grant gracious Heaven

Virtue and Wealth, for both are of thy Gift.

where all the Circumstances do sufficiently fix the Import of the Word.

SENECA says in one of his Epistles (41) that it is a silly thing for us to wish for a good Mind, since it is a thing in our own Power; which there is good to interpret thus, That it is foolish for a Man lazily to wish this without endeavoring and setting himself about it. We have Reason so to interpret him not only in general because he was a Stoic, but because in another Epistle (the tenth) he says very expressly and directly to our point, *Roga bonam mentem, bonam valetudinem Animi, deinde Corporis.*

THUS another Author of the same School says,

Monstro quod ipse tibi possis dare —

Does he therefore exclude the Assistance of the Gods in the matter of Virtue?

IT may be suitable to the Character of HORACE, who as Dr. BENTLEY says was an Epicurean, to do so,

Det vitam, det opes, æquum mi animum ipse parabo.

But another Sentiment, another Language becomes a Stoic and our Poet Juvenal.*

*Orandum est ut sit mens sana in corpore sano;
Fortem posce animum mortis terrore carentem;
Qui spatium vite extremum inter munera ponat
Naturæ, qui ferre queat quoscunque labores,
Nesciat irasci, cupiat nihil —*

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i. e. Pray, says he, for a *sound Body* and for a *brave Mind* which can command and regulate the Passions ; or as in Mr. *Dryden's* Translation (which begins indeed with so *bold* a manner of expressing a good and pious Sentiment, that a Person *unacquainted* with the *Poetic* Phrases and Figures might be startled at it, and think this was an Instance not proper to our Purpose) thus :

- “ Forgive the Gods the rest, and stand confin’d
- “ To Health of Body and Content of Mind.
- “ A Soul that can securely Death defy,
- “ And count it Nature’s Privilege to die,
- “ Serene and manly, harden’d to sustain
- “ The Load of Life, and exercis’d in Pain,
- “ Guiltless of Hate, and Proof against Desire ;
- “ That all things weighs, and nothing can admire ;
- “ That dares prefer the Toils of *Hercules*
- “ To Dalliance, Banquets, and ignoble Ease.

AND *Lubinus* in his Comment upon this Place says, that *PLATO* (in *Alcibiad. 2.*) speaks to the same Purpose, and advises Men excellently to pray for the truest good things, viz. those of the Mind, which is very consonant to what I find cited also by *Neander* from the same Author, That God is never the Cause or Author of Evil, but the Author of good things and the good Behavior of Men, κακὸν ἀναιτίον, ἀγαθὸν αἰτίον, αἰνίς τε εὐσεβείας.

THERE is a Remark I find amongst many other admirable good ones in Dr. BENTLEY’s Pieces against the Author of a *Discourse on Free-thinking*, which is

greatly to my Purpose, intimating it to be an usual and customary thing with the antient *Philosophers* and *Poets* to use such Expressions for Marks upon their Letters and Writings, as I think will bear no other Interpretation than that which supposes such a *Divine Assistance* as I am here concern'd about.

THE Expression I mean is so *Christian-like* that it is a short Epitome (being but two Words) of our *Collect for Grace*; and it is very commonly and piously us'd by Christians in the very original Words, as an *εὐχόμενοι* before their most serious Writings, in Acknowledgement of the Truth of the Doctrine, that GOD does vouchsafe *Illumination* and his *internal Assistance* to Men; and to express solemnly their Desire and their humble Hope of *being under such happy Influences*.

I MUST rest it upon the *learned Doctor's* Credit, which is sufficient to support me, as to the *Fact*, i. e. Truth and Reality of such a Custom; and what I have built upon it I think is *regular*, and will stand as firm as its Foundation.

THE Passage I mean is upon the occasion of his mentioning and defending as genuine that of PLATO in his Letter to *Dionysius*; "As for the Symbol you
" desire to know my serious Letters, and which con-
" tain my real Sentiments from those that do not so, know
" that, Τὸς ἰσὺς ἐπεσφάλας ἐπιστολῆς ΘΕΟΣ ἀρχῆς, ΘΕΟΙ
" δὲ ἡπὸν. GOD begins a serious Letter, and GODS
" one that is otherwise," which Passage the *Fathers* made use of, and not unjustly (says the *Doctor*) as some Indication that PLATO really believ'd *but one GOD*.

" THE

“ THE Symbol he here speaks of made no part of
 “ the Letters, nor began the first Paragraph of them—
 “ It was extrinsic (if I mistake not) to the Letter,
 “ and was a Mark at the Top of it in these Words,
 “ ΣΤΥΝ ΘΕΩ, if it was a serious one, otherwise
 “ ΣΤΥΝ ΘΕΟΙΣ.

“ THESE two were the common Forms in
 “ the Beginning of Writings, or any Discourse of
 “ Importance, and in their Usage were equivalent and
 “ indifferent. *Philosophers* as *Xenophon* and others, ha-
 “ ving it sometimes Σὺν Θεοῖς and *Poets*, as *Euripides*
 “ and *Aristophanes* Σὺν Θεῷ.

So far were the *antient Heathens*, whose Names
 are transmitted to us with the most Honor, from such
 Sentiments as *Ajax* is by *Sophocles* represented to have
 had, when he made answer to his Father, admonishing
 him of Piety and Dependance on the Gods, — O Fa-
 ther ! if a Man that is nothing worth can do brave things
 with the Assistance of the GODS, then I think I may
 hope to come off not ingloriously, and may achieve some-
 thing, even though I should have none of their As-
 sistance.

Πάτερ, θεοῖς καὶ ὁ μηδὲν ὦν ὄμω
 Κρατὶ καὶ ἀλκῇ στήνεται, ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ δίχα
 Κείνων ἀποίδια τέτ' ὅπιστά σιν κλέει.

FAR different, to add yet another Quotation or two,
 were * *Libanius* a Heathen Orator's Thoughts, who
 rightly and piously says, that it is a very great Matter

* Oration 6.

to have the *Divine Good-Will* or Aid, Μεγάλη ῥοπή εὐ-
νοια θεῶν.

THAT Quotation of the learned Dr. *Whitby* before produc'd by *Maximus Tyrinus*, that good Men want God to aid and co-operate with them, δεινῶς συνεργῶντες καὶ συλλήψεις Θεῷ, may be strengthen'd by carrying it on a little farther, and adding these Words which immediately follow those produc'd by him, Τῷς ἐπὶ δαίμονα τῷ κρείττω ῥοπῆς καὶ χειραγωγίαις, That good Men since they have sometimes strong Propensions to Vice, do want God to aid and co-operate with them, by inclining and as it were leading them by the Hand to better things; where it is worthy our Remarkings, that the Word ῥοπή is the very Word which the Greek Fathers express GOD's Grace by, more commonly than by the Word χάρις itself, as the learned *Vossius* has observ'd, H. Pelag. p. 556. *Divinam mentis illuminationem & excitationem* Chrysostomus & Græci alii rarius quidem χάρις, sed tamen τῷ πνεύματι ἐνεργίας vel etiam τὴν ἀνάγειν ῥοπὴν appellant.

IF any did conceive that this Assistance of the Deity to Men did evacuate and destroy the original and natural Powers they were endued withal, they did by this means clog the Idea with insuperable Difficulties, and this as I imagine was the very Reason of *TULLY's* rejecting it. But *PLUTARCH*, who embrac'd the Opinion and Belief of the Divine Intervention and Aid to Men in the Point we are enquiring of, did expressly disclaim and reject that irresistible Violence and unnatural manner of Operation. The Deity he thought does not violently force a Man to this or that Action, but In-

fluences

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fluences him in Consistence with his natural Powers and Liberty.

HE brings in the Passage I am going to mention by way of *vindicating Homer*, in which attempt I have before observ'd that he seems to fail, but that, be it so or otherwise, does not affect our present Argument; for by endeavoring so zealously to justify *Homer*, as representing *Divine Internal Assurances* to Men, and also Mens free Agency truly and consistently, he sufficiently shews his own Sentiments whether he be able to vindicate his favorite Poet or not.

THE Passage I mean is upon the Occasion of his mentioning a visit *Valeria* made to *Volumnia* Mother to *Coriolanus*, by *Divine Guidance* as *Plutarch* thought, because it was of so great Importance and Felicity to the *Romans* at a time of their utmost Distress, when they had laid aside all hopes but what might arise from the Possibility of some extraordinary Incidents. This was a thing not unlike those we so often read of in *Homer*, which yet many (says he) are difficult of believing, of Persons being suddenly seiz'd with a Divine Impulse and extraordinarily excited to certain Actions. It is thus in the Original :

Εν δὲ ταῖς ἀτόποις καὶ παρεξέτοις πράξεσι, καὶ φοβεῖς τι-
νός ἐκθεσιώδους καὶ παραδόξως δομέναις ἐκ ἀναιρῶντα πισ-
τὸν Θεόν, ἀλλὰ κινῶντα τὴν περὶ αὐτοὺς ἰδέσθαι ἐν-
εργά-
ζόμενον, ἀλλὰ φασίας ὁρμῶν ἀγωγῆς. αἱς ἐδὲ ποιεῖ τὴν
πράξιν, ἀκρίβειαν, ἀλλὰ τῷ ἐκείνῳ δίδωσιν ἀρχήν, καὶ τὸ
δαρρῆν καὶ τὸ ἐλπίξεν περὶ τὴν πρῶτον. ἢ γὰρ ἀπαλλακτικὸν ὅπως
τὰ θεῖα πάσης αἰτίας καὶ ἀρχῆς τῶν κατ' ἡμᾶς, ἢ τίς ἂν ἄλ-
λῃ ἐν πρῶτος ὃ βοηθῶσιν ἀνθρώποις καὶ συνεργῶσιν; ἐπὶ
σῶμα

πῶμα δὴπε πλάηοντες ἡμῶν, ὃ δὲ τὰς χεῖρας ὡς δέῃ μετα-
 πθέντες αὐτοὶ καὶ τὰς πόδας, ἀλλὰ τῆς ψυχῆς τὸ πραγματικὸν
 καὶ πραγματικὸν ἀρχαῖς πῶσι καὶ φαντασίαις καὶ ὁπτιόαις ἐγεί-
 ρητες, ἢ τυραννίον ἀποστρέφοντες καὶ ἰσάντες.

AND it is excellently translated thus by Dr. Blom-
 mer,

“ BUT in such things as are of a prodigious and
 “ transcendent Kind, and therefore need some Tou-
 “ ches of * *Enthusiasm and Divine Hardiness*, that
 “ may instigate and carry us thereto; here I say, he
 “ does introduce GOD not as *taking away* the Liber-
 “ ty of our Will, but as moving it to *act freely*; nei-
 “ ther as working in us the *Inclinations and Pursuits*
 “ *themselves*, but as offering those Phantasms and Ob-
 “ jects to our Minds, from whence the Impulse is
 “ conceiv’d, the Resolution taken; by which Re-
 “ presentments however he makes not the Deed in-
 “ voluntary, but *only gives a Beginning to spontaneous*
 “ *Operations*, and superadds Confidence and good
 “ Hope to what is thus willingly undertaken. For
 “ we must either totally discharge and remove GOD
 “ from all manner of *Casuality* as to what we do, and
 “ from a *prime original Influence* on our Affairs, or be
 “ forc’d to confess that there is no other Way of

* One would not perhaps have chosen these Words, though that
 of Enthusiasm is perfectly exact, if we understand it as the Anti-
 ents did (and being their own Word it should be natural for us to
 understand it) as importing not a vain and false Imagination, but
 the reality of Divine Communication and Assistances.

“ *Insinuation*

“ *Insinuation* besides this whereby he does secretly assist Men and *co-operate with them*; for sure the *Help* which he affords us cannot be imagin’d to consist in fashioning the posture of our Body, or directing the Motions of our Hands and Feet, so as they may be serviceable to us for the use of Life; but in exciting the practical Part and the elective Powers of *our Soul*, by initial Overtures and certain Images and Instincts from above; or else on the contrary in a *sudden Aversion* or *seasonable Restraint* of them from *other Things*, and that also by *Hints* and *Apprehensions of his sending*.”

PARALLEL places to this of PLUTARCH might easily be produc’d from Dr. SCOT, TILLOTSON, and others of our *eminent Divines*, where they are treating the Subject of *Divine Grace*, and particularly the Sequel of that Passage of *Archbishop TILLOTSON* which I before alledg’d as a parallel Place to what I cited from *HIEROCLES*, for thus he proceeds,

“ BUT then we are to understand that this Assistance is only *offer’d* to Men, and not *forc’d upon them* whether they will or no. If we will not contribute our own Endeavours—if we grow careless and remiss—God’s Spirit will not always strive with us—we shall be insensibly robb’d of our Strength, and become like other Men! The Assistance which GOD affords us says Dr. SCOT is such as supposes us free Agents, and concurs with and maintains our natural Freedom,” with abundance more to the same Effect.

Y

THUS

THUS I have attempted to make it appear that CHRIST enlighteneth ALL Men who will not shut their Eyes against the Light; that the Heathen World had Divine Assistances to obey the Divine Laws, and advance in Virtue; and that many of them perceiv'd and were very free to make Acknowledgments of these Aids.

IT remains now that we pursue our Subject to its Height by briefly asserting the EVANGELICAL GRACE in the now most ordinary Acceptation of the Word, as importing the Influences and Illuminations of God's holy Spirit upon the Hearts of Christians suitably to the Powers and Faculties of rational Creatures.

HERE then we may (with the learned Dr. WHITBY whose Texts of Scriptures and main of his Arguments upon this Head I take the Liberty to borrow, we may here I say) make use of an Argument taken from the Accounts and Descriptions of the Devil.

HE is represented as a Tempter to Sin, which is generally understood and acknowledg'd to be by raising some Ideas in us, which excite and move us to Evil, though it is true withal, that such his Suggestions are resistible by us, and cannot put us under a necessity of doing Evil.

Now it would be manifestly unreasonable to deny that Influence to GOD and to the GOOD SPIRIT, to excite Men to Goodness, which generally is, and must according to the Scriptures, be allowed to the evil Spirit tempting Men to Wickedness.

THE HOLY SPIRIT is often called the Comforter by our Blessed SAVIOUR, undoubtedly therefore he has an internal Influence and Agency upon Mens Souls;

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Souls; for *Consolation*, *Peace*, and *Joy* are the *inward* Transactions that pass in holy and good Men; the *Symptoms* and the *Effects* of them may sometimes be *visible* and discern'd *outwardly*, but however that be, the thing it self is transacted in the *inmost Soul*, and a good Man's Joy and Peace no Man in the World taketh or can take from him, as he may by Fraud or Violence his Goods or any thing else that is *external*.

THE *holy Spirit* is represented as our * *Sanctifier*.

NOW *Sanctification* consists in the *renewing of the inward Man*, and has the *Soul* for its Subject.

THE Heart of a good Christian, is purify'd by an *inward Change* and *Temper*, which renders it averse from Sin, and sets the Affections and Desires of the Soul against it. The Deeds of the Flesh are mortify'd by such a *Renovation of the Mind* as makes us to discern the pernicious Effects and Consequences of living according to corrupt carnal Appetites.

THE Terror of the penal Sanctions of GOD's *Laws*, the Dreadfulness of his Anger is discern'd, and withal the Felicity of his Favor, the Reasonableness of his Laws and Precepts, the admirable *Beauty* and *Excellence* of that *Exemplar* from whence his Precepts and all *visible Goodness* are transcrib'd; The *Divine Nature* and *Perfections* themselves are in some Measure discern'd, are admir'd and ador'd, whilst this *Illumination* begets an *Abhorrence* of all evil Habits and Actions, of every vitious and corrupt Affection, a *Resolution* to for-

* 1 Cor. vi. v. 11.

take them, a vehement Desire to be freed from them, and a sincere *Endeavor* to resist them.

ALL this Change and Renovation which is most undoubtedly an *internal* Thing (the intellectual rational Faculties being its Subject) is as evidently, if we will give Credit to what the *Scriptures* teach us, wrought in us by the * SPIRIT OF GOD, who *helps our Infirmities*; who † *purifies our Souls*; who enables us to ‡ *mortify the Deeds of the Body*; by whom GOD will grant to us, *i. e.* if we earnestly pray to him for such Grace, and concur diligently with our own Endeavors, he will grant us † *according to the Riches of his Glory to be strengthened with Might by his Spirit in the inner Man.*

WE must take Care indeed that we do not add to the true Notion of *divine Grace* and *internal Assistance* to Men *such Appendages* as will clog it with insuperable Difficulties; that we do not represent it to our selves as if it *evacuated* and *destroy'd* the original Powers GOD endu'd Men with. Certainly these Influences of GOD upon the Soul which himself created, are not destructive of but *suitable* to Mens Nature and Faculties.

ACCORDINGLY we find the *Scripture* makes mention of Mens * *resisting the holy Ghost*; of their † *grieving and quenching the Spirit of GOD*. It speaks of some Mens (*viz.* those of ‡ *Chorazin*) defeating

* Rom. viii. v. 26. † 1 Pet. i. v. 22. ‡ Rom. viii. v. 13. † Eph. iii. v. 16. * Acts vii. v. 51. † Eph. iv. v. 30. 1 Thes. v. v. 19. ‡ Matt. xi. v. 21.

that

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that very Grace which would have persuaded and had its salutary Effects on others; all which, and abundance of other Places of the Holy Scriptures, do imply that the *Assistance* which GOD ordinarily vouchsafes Men to do their Duty, is such as does *not necessitate* and *absolutely determine* them thereto, but such as leaves room for their *own Liberty and Acting*, and thereby for their being *rewarded* when they concur with GOD's Grace, or their being *punished* in case they should be so unwise and obstinate as to reject it.

It is very possible, and not only possible but *ordinary* for good Christians to receive the *blessed Influences of GOD's Grace* without evidently discerning, or being able certainly to know, and distinguish in every Point, *what and how far* is the *Operation of GOD's Spirit*, and *which the proper Motions of their own Mind and Reason*.

THE *Grace of GOD* assists in a rational manner, and does not exclude our Concurrence. We cannot perceive I suppose that it certainly does at such a particular Time and Occasion operate, when yet its Operation and Influences may be great and happy. But we may know, and this Knowledge generally speaking must content Christians, that if we form our Behavior according to the Precepts and Will of GOD, and yield in the whole Course of our Lives a chearful *Obedience* to his holy *Laws*, we may then know, that we are not without the *Assistances of GOD's GRACE*, nor the *Operations of his HOLY SPIRIT*.

Is

Is this wonderful and mysterious, that we should have *GOD's Grace working in us such mighty Effects*, and at the same Time not be able certainly to feel and distinguish such Divine Operation from our own Acting? yet let us not disbelieve, let us be silent and adore: We see that even *Art and Nature are full of Mysteries*, why should we think that there are none in Grace? Especially since it is upon this very Subject of the gracious Operations of *GOD's Spirit* upon Mens Minds, that our Saviour said to Nicodemus; *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: So is every one that is born of the Spirit.* John iii. v. 8.

If we should with *Quietists* and other *Enthusiasts* so ascribe all Acting to GOD as to allow no Concurrency, no Acting at all to the Creature, this would naturally lead to Sloth and Negligence, whereas it is the whole Scope of the *Holy Scriptures* to excite to Acting and Working. And as the Notion of *GOD's Acting entirely and solely in Men* (how specious soever it may look to disclaim themselves and their own Activity) is abundantly more likely to produce Pride, than a modest and humble Opinion of themselves and Actions; so there lies this vast Objection in regard to GOD, that he would upon this Supposition often will and act in Man contrary to what he wills and acts as GOD, and that in the Day of Judgment He would bring into Question, and pass Judgment upon, what were properly not Mens but his own Actions.

AND

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AND thus *Cassian* long since argu'd that *David's* Thought, *e. g.* though it was plainly a good and pious one, to *build a Temple to the Lord*, yet that it could not be of *GOD's* Excitation and Effecting in the Manner afore describ'd, because *GOD* will'd that a Temple should *not* be built by *David* but by his Son.

CONCLUDE we then as against a Sort of *Pelagians* on the one Hand, That there is a special Grace of *GOD* vouchsafed to Men; so also against *Quietists* and *Enthusiasts* on the other Hand, That the Grace of *GOD* does not destroy Nature, but only assist and rectify it; That the *SPIRIT OF GOD* works upon us in and by the natural Actings of our own Mind, and does by no Means exclude our CONCURRENCE and CO-OPERATION.

THERE is nothing further that occurs to me as necessary to be said on this Subject, unless it be an Admonition, with which I shall conclude this Chapter, *viz.* That we should by no Means so look upon the common gracious Provisions of *GOD* for all Men, as to overlook those extraordinary and peculiar ones which we *Christians* have the Advantage of, who have a revealed Law superadded to the Law of Nature; “ which revealed Law yet is not wholly of a different Kind “ from the former, nor does it at all void the Obligation of it.” And amongst the many and great Advantages of it this is one, that hence we know much more of the remarkable Providences of *GOD*, and his special Interpositions in reference both to the natural and to the moral World, than otherwise we could have done.

C H A P.



C H A P. VII.

Of the Sanctions of GOD's Law, where the Righteousness of GOD is both consider'd generally, and also with particular Regard to the Day of Judgment and future State of Recompence.

THAT which remains further to be spoken to is the **SANCTIONS** of **GOD's LAW**, which will lead us to make some Reflections upon the **RIGHTEOUSNESS** of **GOD** in general, and upon the Prospect our *Faith* gives us of a *Day of Judgment*, and *future State of Recompence*, and so to the Conclusion of our Subject.

THE *Sanctions* of *GOD's Law* are properly the Rewards and Punishments of the *Life to come*. For the *Prosperities* of *this Life* are too mean and inconsiderable to be the proper Rewards the Bounty and Goodness of **GOD** will bestow upon his obedient Children, and the *Evils* of *this World* are rather **GOD's Discipline** to admonish, amend, and purify Men, than in strict Propriety the *Sanctions* of his *Law*.

GOD has set **LIFE** and **DEATH** before Men.
 * *The Wages of Sin is Death, the Gift of God is eternal Life through Jesus Christ our Lord.* Awful and most

* Rom. vi. v. ult.

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affecting Prospect of things most apt to move the great Springs of human Actions our Hopes and Fears !

FEAR is intimate to our Being, and the *most wakeful Passion* in the Soul of Man. It was implanted in Men to be one of their *strongest Securities against Sin*, and that they might have *Plenty of Motives to Obedience*, and not given to be a Snare to them, (as has been already observ'd) and therefore certainly Mens Obedience to GOD's Laws is not vitiated and render'd unacceptable by *every Mixture of Fear* that is concern'd with it, as neither by their *Hope* of the Heavenly Reward, the Happiness of Heaven not being a different thing from the purest Service and the Enjoyment of GOD.

THE *Divine Justice* as it ought very thankfully to be acknowledg'd in *general*, so it is *evidently discernible* in many Respects, and ought firmly to be *believ'd* as to that which is *not yet executed*, but will be compleatly executed in the *great Day of Judgment*.

THE *Justice* or *Righteousness* of GOD has sometimes been represented as something *altogether incomprehensible* by us, and of which we can have *no Idea or Conception*.

I AM not going to argue against that Maxim of the Schools, *Quod nihil predicatur univocè de Deo & Creaturis*. I agree with them, and think it is a Doctrine entirely consonant both to natural Reason and to the Holy Scriptures, *That nothing is to be ascrib'd to GOD and to the Creature exactly in the same Manner*. It is allow'd that the *Moral Perfections* of GOD are
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vastly,

vastly, infinitely different from the Excellencies in the *Creatures* that bear a Resemblance to them; but however they are not *totally* different in Kind and Sort. Whatever is good in the *Creatures* are *corresponding* Excellencies, and *Transcripts* from the *Divine Perfection*, however short they may fall, even infinitely short of the *great Original*.

WE must either acknowledge this, or else we say in Effect, that the Holy Scriptures amuse us with *unmeaning* Words, and propose as the strongest Arguments and Motives to us to perform our Duty what is really no Motive at all thereto; for they every where set before us the *Righteousness* of GOD, as they do also all his other *Moral Attributes*, both as a Pattern for us to resemble Him in, and as a Foundation for our worthy Apprehensions of Him, and for a Behavior in all Respects *correspondent* both to his Justice and other Perfections. And still it is evident that if we knew nothing at all, what his *Righteousness* or his *Goodness* imported, it would be utterly impracticable for us to attempt the acquiring a Resemblance of Him, the thing in which even *Pagans* plac'd Mens chiefest Glory as well as Duty. And upon the same Supposition it would neither be a Restraint to us from doing Evil, nor a Comfort to us when we had been careful to obey the Divine Precepts to be told that GOD is *just*, and will certainly recompence righteously to us, according to our Deservings; since if his *Righteousness* was somewhat we could have no *Idea* of, then a thousand such Declarations could not give us the least Assurance, but that either our greatest Crimes persist-

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ed in might be pass'd over with an *indolent indiscriminating Lenity* on the one Hand, or that on the other side our Care and Zeal to serve and please Him might be *unregarded*, and we might find ourselves at last in the Hands of an *unmerciful and cruel Judge*.

BUT surely the Scripture-Declarations are not of such a Nature, nor is there any *Attribute* of the *Supreme Being*, from which a Man that Studies, *i. e.* that makes it his principal Thought and Care to please Him, may gather more Comfort as well as Improvement in meditating on it than this.

THE *Justice* of GOD has too often been thought a Subject proper *only* to inspire Men with *Dread and Terror*; and indeed the Representations that have sometimes been made thereof have been incapable of begetting any other Sentiments, whilst it has been zealously contended for that GOD has made infinite Numbers of Men incapable of obtaining his *Grace and Favor*, and for the Sake of displaying in them and their Miseries his *vindictive or avenging Justice*, which is the *only* Notion of *Divine Justice* which many Persons seem to have.

YET it may truly be affirm'd and ought to be both for the Honour of GOD and for the Benefit and Comfort of Men, that whenever we shall make right and true Representations of the *Divine Justice*, and meditate seriously on it in its *due Extent*, we shall not only be thereby excited to seek Pardon for our past Offences, or be restrain'd from sinning for the Time to come by the Fear of Punishment it will pursue us with (which is without Question a very obvious and

proper Inference to be deduc'd from it) but we shall also, if there be no contracted Blindness, no Impediments from our Lufts and Passions, we shall be struck with the admirable *Beauty* of it, with its *exact Proportion*, its *perfect Symmetry*; we shall be extremely desirous, and resolve through the Grace of GOD, to form all our own Thoughts, and to execute all our Designs and Actions under the constant Influences of it.

GOD has made every thing as it is imply'd in some of * *Job's* Expressions, in *Weight and Measure*. But is there *Proportion* and *Suitableness* only in the *material World*, which is of the least Consequence, and would infinite Wisdom omit it in the *intellectual World* in regard to *rational Creatures*? Or is it lovely and agreeable to the Mind of Man, to observe a *Correspondency* and *fit Agreement* between the innumerable *Bodies* that compose the Universe, and is it not at all so to observe that *Harmony* that is amongst *rational Natures*, and in the *World of Spirits*, whilst they act every one in his Place, according to the immutable Reason of things, in exact Suitableness to the Relation which they respectively do bear to one another?

INDEED by the irregularity of *Man* this beautiful *Symmetry* of the intellectual World is in a great Measure disturb'd as to what regards our World and the Transactions of it, and so in the Case also of the *Angels* that kept not their first Estate.

* *Ch. xxviii. v. 25.*

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GOD did provide against this *Irregularity* and *Dissonance* by all the Methods that were consistent with the *Liberty* of his Creatures, and it was not congruous to his Wisdom, when He had endu'd Man with *Freedom* to act well or ill, that He should put *such a Bar* against his acting ill as would be *inconsistent* with that *Nature* and that *Liberty* he had given him.

UPON the ill-acting therefore of the rational Creature the JUSTICE of GOD must needs exert itself after a *different* Way from what it would have done without this Event. “ It is by the Event of *Sin* that “ GOD’s *Justice* becomes *vindictive* or *avenging*; this “ is therefore only an *accessory* Denomination and Relation of it. It is through the Creature’s Fault that “ GOD’s *Justice* comes to be *vindictive*, and to be manifested in Evil. The substantial Part of it might “ have been manifested without the Event of Sin, by “ rendering to every rational Creature according to “ his Works and Choice, in the most accurate Proportion; for had they all chosen GOD and his Goodness, yet they might have chosen thus with almost “ infinite Differences as to the Manner and Degrees “ of it.”

THE Words in which I have chosen to express this Sentiment, which I take to be just and rational, are those of a *Modern Author*, whose clear and strong Manner of Expression I have before commended; but I leave it to the *learned* Reader to judge, if the same is not imply’d in the following Words of *Justin Martyr*, which are amongst the Fragments at the End of his Dialogue with *Trypho*, publish’d by Mr. S. Jebb. 1719.

*Ωσμε

ὥστε πᾶσι τοῖς νομομένοις σώματιν καὶ τῷ Θεῷ συμ-
 παθεῖν καὶ τὸ σῶμα ἔχειν· ὥστε καὶ τῷ Θεῷ δικαίῳ ὄντι, τοῖς
 ταῖς καλὰς θεωρημασίαις, ἀκόλουθον εἶναι τὸ κατ' ἀξίαν ἐκδῶ
 ἀπονεύμασι.

THE *Latin* Translation imports thus; *As it is natu-
 ral to all Bodies which GOD has made to have their
 Shadows, so it pertains to GOD who is just to recompence
 Rewards [and Punishments] to those who reverence Virtue
 [and to those who follow Vice,] to every one according to
 his Deserts.* Where the Words included in the *Para-
 thesis's* are added by the Translator. There is no
 manner of Doubt, but that *Justin Martyr* believ'd
 GOD would recompence Evil suitably to Mens evil
 Deservings, as well as Rewards to good Men; but he
 might not think it absolutely necessary always to ex-
 press his Belief of the former, when his Subject led
 him to speak of the latter; and this Fragment as it is
 transmitted to us shews, that this *learned Father* did
 conceive, and had a Notion of a large Field, wherein
 the *Justice* of GOD might exert itself, even without
 considering it as *vindictive* or concern'd in inflicting Pu-
 nishments.

By a small *Emendation* indeed, only altering the
Case, and reading τῷ Θεῷ δικαίῳ ὄντι instead of τῷ
 Θεῷ δικαίῳ ὄντι, the Sentiment may be very much al-
 ter'd, and the Similitude might seem more exactly pro-
 per, importing thus; *That as it is natural to all Bodies
 which GOD has made to have their Shadows, so GOD
 being just it is natural to rational Beings uncorrupted and
 preserving Virtue, as Shadows of the Divine Nature and
 Excellence,*

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Excellence, to appoint, to give and recompence to every one suitably to their Nature, Relation, and Demerits.

THIS I confess is a beautiful Thought, and a more exact Allusion than the other, because, as the *Schoolmen* say, *Quicquid est in Deo est Deus*, and therefore GOD's Justice cannot in Strictness be resembled to a *Shadow*, which is *extrinsic* to the Body.

BUT this is no certain Argument against the present reading by any means; for the *antient Fathers* were not commonly speaking very exact in their *Similitudes*, and *this Father*, though one of the most exact and learned of them, might either have taken a *Liberty and Latitude* he knew to be very common in *Allusions*, whilst he might think more exactly, or he might perhaps never have consider'd that Point so accurately, or not have come to the same Determination in it as afterwards the *Schoolmen* did.

THIS is indeed a Sense of the Words that has never been given so far as I know; and if the Words stand as they are come down to us without any Emendations or Supplements, they are capable of no other Sense, I presume, than what I have before given and do conceive very pertinent to the Matter now in hand.

GOD willeth not the Death of a Sinner; he willeth not the Misery and Destruction of his Creatures, but their Happiness. *Hell* and all its *Harbingers* and *preluding Torments* are not the Creatures of his original and proper Design: All *vindictive* Judgments are his *strange Works*, extorted by Mens Perverseness; the Perdition of the Wicked is not of GOD, but of themselves.

themselves. *Who shall accuse Thee, O GOD, for the Nations that perish? Thou lovest all Things that are, and abhorrest nothing that Thou hast made! And never wouldst Thou have made any Thing if Thou hadst hated it, O Lord Thou Lover of Souls!*

A COMMENTATOR upon PYTHAGORAS's golden Verses, where he speaks of *αὐθιγὰ μῦθα* says, it is to denote that Men choose these Evils themselves, and that GOD is by no Means the Author of them, never the Cause or Author of Evil, and it is well known how frequently and zealously PLATO and his Followers have spoken to the same Purpose.

BUT now as the Creature has *sinn'd*, the Justice of GOD makes it as necessary that obstinate incorrigible Sinners should be *punished*, as that those Creatures who have not sinned, or they who have sinned and amended themselves, and taken Advantages of the Methods Divine Goodness propos'd, should be rewarded and made *happy*.

FOR as the Reason of the Thing might inform us, that it could not become either the Justice or the Wisdom of GOD to give to Mankind excellent Laws without annexing any Sanctions to them, whereby both the Obedient shall be rewarded, and the Disobedient punish'd; and as we see in Fact too, that the Divine Wisdom has not given such imperfect Laws, so little adapted to operate on those to whom they were given, so we ought to persuade our selves, that he has not annex'd these suitable and proper Sanctions in a vain delusive Shew, by purposing, however Men shall behave themselves, to omit the Execution of them.

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THAT GOD should suffer the Event to be the same to him that feareth him, and to him that feareth him not, but looks upon his holy Laws with Contempt and Scorn; that their *main Lot*, or *lasting Portion* and Recompence, should be *equal*, is a Thing that implies the most *evident and palpable Disproportion*, if we consider it only in the Light that natural Reason holds out to us.

As GOD is most certainly a *Rewarder* of all them that honestly and truly seek him, so He is greatly to be feared in that He is to the Wicked a *consuming Fire*; as we are expressly taught in *Holy Writ*.

HE that executed his signal Vengeance upon the obstinate and rebellious *Jews* in a very dreadful manner in their Destruction; He that shewed his mighty and terrible Wonders in the Land of *Egypt* against a perverse *Pharoah*; He that rain'd a Storm of Fire and Brimstone upon a wicked *Sodom*; He that brought in the Flood upon the *whole World of the Ungodly*, saving eight Persons only, He is the *same GOD Yesterday, to Day, and for ever*. The Disobedience of Men to his Holy Laws; their doing vile and perverse Things, unbecoming the Dignity of their Natures, in Contradiction to the Light and Law He has given them, this is still displeasing and offensive to Him as ever it was; and if we sin against *greater Light*, it is an Aggravation doubtless of our Fault, and so will subject us to a proportionably greater Punishment.

WE may discern the *Righteousness* of GOD *actually* and *clearly* manifested by so many Arguments, and so many Instances, which have no Obscurity or Difficulty, that we may well admit the Declarations and Assu-

rances given by *Revelation* as a *concurrent Proof* together with these *present Evidences* that *GOD* is *righteous in all his ways*, and rest satisfied that it will be in the *Life to come* (which is the proper State of Retribution) both *complete* and *evident* to the whole Assembly of Men and Angels.

THE Difficulties that have perplex'd Men in regard to the *discerning of GOD's Righteousness* are much better solv'd by this *Prospect*, which we entertain upon the *best Authority*, than they could be by a *Retrospection*, such as the *Platonists* and many besides them had of old their Recourse to, and embrac'd *without any Authority*.

FOR all this *Punishment* they talk of, is upon their own *Hypothesis* for Sins they have no *Conscience* or *Reminiscence*, in short *no manner of Knowledge* of; how then should it have any effect (as *Justin Martyr* observes) to make them hate and avoid the same Crime, to amend and purify them? And *Irenaeus*, as I find him quoted in a Note upon that place of *Justin*, argues also to the same Purpose, *oportebat eas [animas scilicet quae emitebantur] meminisse eorum quae ante facta sunt, uti ea quae deerant adimplerent, & non circa eadem voluntates continuatim miserabiliter laborarent.*

IT should follow upon this *Hypothesis*, that every *Man* is at last purify'd from his Sins and Defilements at his *Exit*, and that he is ever *gradually purer* in the proportion that he advances towards it; which is evidently seen too often to be very *false in Fact*, if we may judge of a *Tree* by the *Fruits* it produces.

WITHOUT our looking back to any such *imaginary State of Pre-existence*, and even upon a *Concession*,

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† Job x

tion, that many Persons may have sustain'd in this Life greater Pains and Miseries than were *proportionate to or meant for the Punishment of their Sins* (such Sufferings perhaps depending upon and being wisely suited to their Connection unknown to us with invisible * superior Beings) still upon this Concession I say the *Justice of GOD* may very easily be clear'd, and his *Goodness* shewn in a *future over-Weight of Felicity*. And a pious Hope of such *Recompence to come*, grounded on *Divine Promises*, must be infinitely preferable to a *dark Notion* of things suppos'd by Men to have pass'd intimately concerning them, which yet they have *no remembrance of*, neither *Knowledge of any other Way*.

As to that *Part* of the *Righteousness* and the *Providence* of GOD which is in *Futurity*, it is not possible we should now *see* it, or *know* it in strict Propriety of the Word; but it is sufficient that we have all the Reason in the World to *believe* it.

GOD's Inspection of Man's Actions and Conduct, which but a very small and inconsiderable Number of Men in any Age or under any Dispensation have been so hardy as to deny, is abundantly confirm'd in Scripture, † *God's Eyes are upon the Ways of Man, and He seeth all his Goings.* † *He is a God of Knowledge,*

* “ Had we a clear Knowledge of our Relation to other reasonable but superior Creatures, I mean the Angels that inhabit the immense and glorious Regions above us, and to those that fill the Stars and Planets — Had we a perfect and comprehensive View of the whole Scheme of the divine Oeconomy in relation to all those Parts of his Government, and how in his Administration in the different Parts of it, He promoted the great and glorious Design of the whole, we should have quite another Apprehension of God's Wisdom and Justice.

† Sir Richard Blackmore's Preface to his Paraphrase on Job.
† Job xxxiv. v. 21. † 1 Sam. ii. v. 3.

and by Him Actions are weigh'd. The Lord searcheth all Hearts and understandeth all the Imaginations of the Thoughts. The Nature and Operations, and all the Circumstances of every Being are continually under his Inspection, and display'd before him; * Neither is there any Creature that is not manifest in his Sight, but all things are naked and opened unto the Eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

Now GOD's Knowledge and Observation of us is not merely Speculative. He sees and observes our Thoughts, Words, and Actions, not as we sometimes see things out of Curiosity only; but He sees whether or no we answer the End of our Creation; He sees them in order to dispense proportionate Favor and Rewards, or Punishment and Misery according to their Demerit.

EVEN before that our Saviour Christ had enlighten'd (or cast a greater Light upon) the Doctrines of Life and Immortality, and every thing relating to a Future State, the royal and inspir'd Preacher teaches in the Conclusion of his Book, as the weightiest Motive that could be urg'd to induce Men to † Fear God, and keep his Commandments, that GOD will bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be Good or whether it be Evil.

AND indeed Natural Reason flies to the Hope and Belief of a Future Judgment in the general and main Idea of it, i. e. to a future State of Retribution. I will not here alledge, that Reason recurs to this for that without it there would lie insuperable Objections against the Divine Wisdom and Justice, from the pro-

* Hebr. iv. 13. † 2 Tim. i. 10. — φωτίσαντος δὲ ζωὴν καὶ ἀποδεδειγμένην διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου — Illuminavit autem Vivam & Incorruptionem per Evangelium, says the vulgar Latin. † Eccles. ult.

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miscellaneous Events which happen to Men in this World. This, though in it self a very good and strong Argument for a *future Retribution*, I will omit here, lest I should be thought to *argue in a Circle*, and I will rather briefly touch upon some other Arguments that are not liable to such a Remark, as thus,

WE see that all *inanimate* and *irrational* Creatures of GOD do steadily *fulfil his Word*, i. e. do serve the Purposes to which they were created by Him, and can it then in reason be suppos'd that *Man*, a Creature endu'd with such noble Faculties! should either be produc'd without an Obligation to pay Obedience and Homage to his *Creator*? Or that being under such an Obligation, and acting in Contempt and Defiance of it, as long as ever this Life shall last, should not when that is ended be call'd to Account and animadverted on for his Disobedience? And to what other End and Purpose can that be ascrib'd, which we are all sensible of, that there is in every Man a Power to reflect upon, and to form a Judgment of his own Actions, nay, and not only that there is a Power to reflect, but that there is a *necessary* and *irresistible* Reflection upon, and Judgment of his Behavior and Conversation past, which he cannot put by even when it is troublesome to him; for what other End can this be imagin'd but that those inward Reflections of our Consciences are implanted in us, and ordain'd by Him that made us, to make us sensible *He will be our Judge*, as well as we must acknowledge (upon other sufficient Evidence) that *He is our Creator*? What else, but that these inward Sentences of our own Hearts are to be so many *Witnesses* before the *Tribunal of Heaven hereafter*, as well

well as to *warn* and *admonish* us in the mean Time to flee from the Wrath to come, by *correcting* and *amending* what we are thus inform'd we have done amiss?

THUS much unassisted Reason might have dictated as to the *main Idea* of a future Judgment and Recompence.

AND indeed *natural Conscience* (as a learned Man has observ'd) might well of it self apprehend and fearfully forebode, that amongst the *Variety* of great and terrible Punishments due to Sin, SHAME which is ever found to be so grievous to our Nature, should bear its Part.

FOR it is not so reasonable to think that *Hypocrites*, or any Men who have liv'd base degenerate Lives, in Contempt of the divine Laws written upon their Hearts, should receive such a Doom as they have merited in *private*, and without any Observers, as it is to believe, that they shall receive their just Sentence in *such a Manner*, that they who have observ'd either their *painted Shew* of *Virtue* and *Probity*, or their *more open and impudent Improbability*, shall also be Spectators of the terrible but just Fate attending them, and thus become a Means of aggravating their Punishment. For it is no Argument that a *harden'd Sinner*, who is bold enough to boast perhaps of his Sins here, will therefore be incapable of being affected with *Shame* then, when he shall be made to see his Sins in *another*, a *true* and *dreadful* Light.

BUT we are not speaking now of *Conjectures*, and *Fore-bodings* that are *only probable*; we know it for a Certainty from express Revelation, that every Man shall receive the just Doom his Actions have merited in the awful Solemnity of a *general* and *public Judgment*.

EVERY Man will be brought into Judgment not only with regard to *Himself*, as one particular of the

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Creatures of GOD, endu'd with Reason and Liberty and a Self-conscious Principle; but also with regard to the *whole intelligent Creation*, and the whole Procedure of GOD *therewith*.

THE *Judge of the whole Earth* will not only do right, but he will likewise in his good time *make it exceeding plain and manifest that he does right*.

AND thus it is that the recompensing and rewarding of some (*i. e.* the compleat rewarding) is deferred to them upon the account of this *Manifestation of GOD's righteous Procedure*, as *Judge of the whole Universe*; and subserviently hereunto, that this deferring of the Reward to some may tend to the Benefit of others, as it is intimated by the Author of *Ep. to the Heb. c. II. v. ult.* and *these, i. e.* good and illustrious Men before spoken of, *having obtained a good report through Faith, received not the Promise, GOD having provided some better Thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect*.

So that good Men must want the *Completion* of their Reward till the *Day of Judgment*, that then in their joyful Sentence and the Condemnation of the Wicked, *all the Universe*, the whole Assemblage of Men and Angels may at once clearly see the *Righteousness of GOD* made manifest, and *all his Attributes* gloriously display'd, without any of that mysterious Dark-ness, which will more or less (in regard to Men at least) *till then* involve the Methods of *Divine Providence*, and disappoint the curious Researches of the most inquisitive and penetrating human Wit.

WE may conclude with a good Observation, that St. AUSTIN, and many others after and possibly before

fore him too, have made as to the main of it, *viz.* that as there is a *visible Correspondency* in some of GOD's Administrations, some manifest *Indications of his special Animadversion* upon Mens affairs and Actions; that we may acknowledge from hence in part the *Righteousness*, which we may well look for, and well conceive an essential Attribute in the *Governor of the World*; so it is *obscure and hid* in many others, that we may also know there is *another Day to come* which will more fully declare it; and that we may live as becomes those who are to *give account of all our Actions to a RIGHTEOUS JUDGE.*

LET us therefore by our *diligent Endeavors* and our *earnest Prayers* seek to advance our selves to the best Degree of Knowledge we can, of GOD and his ATTRIBUTES, of his LAW and our DUTY, and be very careful that we practise suitably to the Light and Knowledge we have attain'd. Thus let us *commit our selves to GOD's HOLY PROTECTION*, thus *depend upon his GOOD PROVIDENCE.* And thus prepar'd with *Patience and Joy*, becoming the *Hope of Christians*, let us wait for that *bright and glorious Day*, which shall *fully display* THE PERFECT BEAUTY OF GOD'S OECONOMY TOWARDS US, AND AT ONCE THE HARMONY OF ALL THE DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.

By holy Penitence, by watchful Care,

Propitiated Heav'n, and Conscience clear,

We'll meet advancing Death, and cheerful say,

All bright the Prospect BREAK-ETERNAL DAY!

THE



THE APPENDIX.



IT has sometimes been included in Mens Notion of *God's Providence*, that he does *always judicially determine happy or unhappy Events to Men here in this World, in exact proportion to their good or ill deserving*; and that this must needs be so as *God is righteous*. An Error that has oftentimes very ill Consequences, both in respect of *Charity* towards Men, and of *Piety* towards God!

FOR *Superstition* in this, as in many other Instances, may prove the occasion of, and in the End beget *Impiety*: And tho' Men may indeed be so *constantly credulous*, as to think they see those Things *actually accomplished* which they conceive *ought in Justice to be*, and that they discern the evident Tokens of *GOD's Anger*, and his *signal Judgments* in the Condition and Circumstances of those whom they please to call *Sinners*; yet if their *Superstition* should at any time a little abate, and the Strength of their *Fancy* fail them;

if they should perceive in any cases the *real Events* to disagree with the *Rules* they have *feign'd*, and presumptuously prescrib'd to the *Divine Wisdom*, they will then certainly be expos'd to some danger of imagining, that there is no such Thing at all as *Providence*, nor a *righteous Administration* of the World, because it does not answer their *principal Idea* and Conception of it. And even in the *former* case they may be tempted to think, that since GOD does recompense so exactly and adequately to Men according to their Deeds in *this Life*, there will be *no need* of, and therefore that there will be *no future Judgment and Retribution*.

BUT *public signal Judgments* are a sort of *Divine Providences*, which are not so very frequently exhibited to the World as some imagine. Sentence is not executed against the Evil-doer *immediately* upon the committing of his evil Deeds. Possibly he may continue prosperous and flourishing to the utmost Period of his Life: He may end his Days in Peace (I mean external Peace) and may be carry'd to his Grave in Pomp and Splendor, without any *special Interposition of Providence* from the Beginning to the End of his *Part* to mark him for a Reprobate; and yet there can be no Grounds from all this to impeach or to doubt of *God's Righteousness*. His *Patience* is no Argument either of want of Strength and Power, or of his neglect of human Affairs. GOD is provok'd every Day, yet he is a *righteous Judge*.

IT is not so much to be wonder'd at that many of the *Pagans* thought the *Divine Justice* could not be established, without the evidence of an exact Recompence

pence to Men in *this World*, according to what they had done here, or to what they had done, as some of them thought, in a former State.

THIS was consequent arguing in a Disciple of *Plato*, it was proper, I mean, and suitable to his Scheme and Principles, because he believ'd that this Life was the State of *Punishment* (as well as *Purification* thereby) for the Misbehaviour of the Soul in a former State of Existence; and as for a *future Life*, those of that School did not consider it as a *State of Recompence*, but merely as a *Restoration* of the Soul, after condign Punishment and Purifying in this World, to its former and *original State*.

BUT the *Christian* Principles do not lead us, do not permit us so to account for the *Providence* and the *Righteousness* of GOD; and I have shewn the *Weakness* and *Darkness* of PLATONISM as to *this Point* in the foregoing Essay. At present it may be of good use to take notice of and guard against several erroneous Notions Men may entertain, and Reflections that are often made upon this Subject, contrary to *Piety*, *Charity*, and *Virtue*, and wherein *Fancy* and *irregular Passions* too often are indulg'd under the *shew of Sanctity and Religion*.

MEN sometimes affect to form their Conduct by uncertain Conjectures, and Inferences from their Remarks upon what they look on as *special Providences*, rather than by the *direct and plain Rules* GOD has given us to walk by; which Suppositions not being follow'd by the Success they expected, they thereupon fall into a State of *Inactivity* and *Despondence*. There have been Instances of this in otherwise ex-

cellent good Men, who have thought that there appear'd in Affairs they have been engag'd in (with a full Persuasion of their being honest, honourable and pious) * *such Characters of an angry Providence, that it seem'd as if God was against them; and that their struggling with much Opposition and Difficulties, was like a fighting against God.* A strange Conceit! that a Man can be fighting against God, whilst he is suppos'd at the same time to be doing what is agreeable to Reason and the Will of God.

SUCH a Notion, if uniformly carry'd on in the common Affairs of Life to its true Consequences, would destroy all Bravery and Perseverance in good Endeavours; it would put an end to all struggling with great and long-continu'd Difficulties in the best of Causes; and if it can have such a pernicious influence upon very good Men, how easily is it like to take off from all noble and virtuous Enterprizes (which are not wont to be without their Difficulties) Men who are already but too cold in such Pursuits, and want nothing to desist or go back but some colourable Excuse for their Sloth and Indifference?

BUT such a Remarkings, and making Practical Inferences from Divine Providences as I am now speaking of, does often prove a fatal Snare to Virtue, by letting loose ambitious, covetous, or other unlawful Desires, which had been, and might otherwise have been, kept under some tolerable Restraint and Government.

IT's true, it is an Argument of a sottish and profane Mind for a Man to have no Regard to Divine

* Vid. Bishop Burnet's Hist. of his own Times, p. 141.

Providence at all, when *God's Judgments* are (as *David* says of the wicked) *far above out of his sight*; and yet if we should keep our Eye so constantly and solely fix'd upon them, as to lose sight of the *certain Rules* of Moral Life, and of Christian Deportment, we shall wretchedly err therein; we shall dangerously or fatally deviate from the true Path of our Duty, under the Influence of our strongest Inclinations, and secret Passions, mistaken for the *Guidance of Providence*, which is not, nor was ever intended by God to be the *main Guide*, or to be *thus singly and separate* a Rule for us to form our Conduct by.

IF *mere Opportunity* does invite to dishonest Practices, and that so strongly, that Mens falling in therewith is continually observable, and even proverbially caution'd against, (in Expressions somewhat too crude perhaps and absolute) if *Opportunity in it self* is oft so dangerous to Mens Virtue, who are not firmly fix'd and resolv'd in it; how much more *such Opportunities* which they shall fancy to come from GOD in some especial and extraordinary manner; *such* a manner as they may, by the same convenient strength of Fancy, as easily persuade themselves, brings along with it a Dispensation for overlooking in this instance the more ordinary and vulgar Rule of Duty?

" IT is too common a thing (* says a late *excellent Divine* of eminent Rank and Character) for
 " Men to do unjust and wicked things, and call it
 " concurring with Providence, as *David's Men*, and
 " amongst them particularly *Abishai* said to him,

* *Bishop Fleetwood.*

" when

“ when he saw a fair Opportunity of Murdering
 “ *Saul, GOD hath delivered thine Enemy into thy*
 “ *hand this Day, now therefore let me smite him.*” And
 there are many resembling cases, (only with less colourable pretence and plausibility than here might be) where Men excite and encourage one another to unjust and wicked Actions by such kind of Arguments, as if it were withstanding the Purposes of God, as if it were a strange folly and weakness, if not a negligent and unthankful *disregarding of his Providence*, not to do *dishonest and base* things, when a very favourable and convenient Opportunity of doing them presents it self.

AGAIN, it is too common for Men to embrace their several *Opinions*, and often in Matters of very small importance with such an extravagant Zeal and Fondness, that they persuade themselves those Tenets are the peculiar Care and Concern of *God's Providence*; and then such a *Conceit* is usually accompany'd with the looking upon Men who differ from them in these trifling Matters, or who perhaps think otherwise than they do with a great deal of Reason, as the Enemies of *GOD and Religion*, evidently *mark'd out* as such by *Heaven* it self.

NOT only *doubtful Causes* have been determin'd more or less probably, but there have been Causes and Matters judg'd, some to be good and others to be bad, *against the Truth and Reason* of Things, by the mere intervention of a little *Accident*, which has by the help of a strong Credulity been improv'd into a *Divine Interposition*, and a *Declaration of Heaven*

The APPENDIX.

7

in favour of such a side of the Cause or Question in debate.

To say nothing of Mens *feigning extraordinary Providences*, and even *miraculous Events*, where their Fancy has not so well serv'd them, or where they could not in a probable manner, with any kind of Plausibility, represent *Providence* as *specially interposing* in their Cause by any *real Occurrences*; a Method both unsuitable, and also very mischievous in the End to the Interest of the true Religion! To omit this, which it may be presum'd and hop'd is not a very ordinary case: The ascribing of Events without a sufficient Warrant to a *judicial Providence*, in vengeance of some particular Sins of Men real or imaginary, is a thing that many Men, who have otherwise a good Sense of Piety, are apt both to indulge and applaud themselves therein.

It would be easy to fill whole Volumes with the Instances of this; and it is too common and ordinary a thing for Men, when they are injur'd, or suppose themselves to be so, to pronounce in the most *peremptory* manner, and persuade themselves with equal Assurance, as if they had had an express Revelation of it from Heaven, that such things so wrongfully detain'd or taken from them *shall never prosper*; but have either a short Continuance, or introduce Poverty and some signal Calamity to such Persons themselves, or at the least to their Posterity, the dangerous Consequences of which false Persuasion have been already hinted.

THE *inferring of Mens Guilt and heinous Wickedness from their Sufferings and Afflictions*, is a thing so very
unrea-

unreasonable, and yet so common, that it cannot be here lightly pass'd over consistently with my present Design.

Now I will not say that this proceeds *always and altogether* from an *uncharitable* disposition to our Neighbour; because we see that Men do sometimes make this same Inference in regard to *themselves*. When they meet with some severer Affliction, some greater Calamity than is, or they think to be, very ordinary, they grow *melancholy*, and it may be *desperate*, under the Apprehension of their being herein *mark'd out* by GOD as the greatest of Sinners, and manifest Objects of his especial Vengeance.

It is true indeed, when we are under the afflicting Hand of GOD, we should take care to look *inwards*, and see what wants to be amended in us. Such Circumstances are *loud Monitors* to us to look back upon our past Misbehaviour, and to resolve amidst fervent Prayers for Pardon upon a greater Caution in our future Conduct. But still we should do very wrong to look upon these Afflictions as infallible Arguments of GOD's treating us as *Enemies and Reprobates*. We should rather look upon them (if upon serious Examination we do not find our selves in a State of Enmity to GOD) as *merciful Chastisements*, as *Invitations* thro' Patience and pious Submission to a *more eminent degree of future Felicity*, to which such Introduction was proper, and such difficult Steps of Ascent to it necessary. Not that the *mere Tolerance of Afflictions* can have any such Effect and Virtue, but the sustaining of them in such a manner as we ought to do, with Meekness, Humility, and Patience,

ence as becomes Christians, may help to purify the polluted Soul, and upon this to procure its better Acceptance and Favour with GOD through *Christ*.

THIS World is not the *proper Scene* and Place design'd by GOD for the *mere Punishment of Sinners*. The present Dispensations of GOD to Men, those of *afflictive Providences* as well as others, are admonitions and invitations to Repentance, and to improvement in Virtue; and it is their proper effect and tendency to lead thereto, unless Mens own perverseness be the Obstruction.

NOW if we must not and ought not in reason to determine with such Severity in regard to *our selves*, where we are conscious, and certain by an indubitable Sentiment of Sin in some degree and instances, much less should we presume to give such a Sentence and Judgment in reference to our *Neighbour*. Whether he be guilty of such Sins as we often suspect or no, at least of such Circumstances and Aggravations of them as are within the Heart, is what GOD only knows and not we; *to his own Master he either stands or falls*; it is none of our Business, but a presumptuous, uncharitable and very criminal Impertinence to judge and determine of him. *Evil happeneth to the righteous as well as to the wicked in this World*; nor can we be certain that there are not, nay it is highly probable that there are of the *best of Men* in the number of those, whose Lot it is to drink deepest of the bitter Cup of Affliction, who have the heaviest Loads of mere temporal Calamities; which is not however any Argument or just Reason for disbelieving *God's Providence*, as I hope has sufficiently appear'd.

GOD is indeed *the Author of all afflictive Evils*, such Events arriving sometimes by his *special Interposition*, and at other times when they do not so, yet according to a *general Order and settled Course of Providence*. But what unreasonable and false Inferences may Men make from a true Principle? Thus we find that from this very Principle and allow'd Maxim, that *GOD was the Author of afflictive Evil*; the *Jews* of our *Saviour's time*, (who were a perverse Generation of Men, and ill Patterns for us to follow) inferr'd a Conclusion that could not really be inferr'd from them. They believ'd, that all afflictive Evil a Man ever suffer'd, was an immediate Providence of GOD recompensing unto him according to his Demerits, a pure infliction of Divine Vengeance on the account of some Sin he had been guilty of; and even in a Case where there was the *least room* for this uncharitable Suspicion, where a Man *came into the World* with an unhappy and calamitous Circumstance, they were resolv'd not to depart from their *Rule*, but attributed such Calamity either to the Sins of the Person himself before he was born, in a former State of Existence, or else to the Sins of his Parents. Thus we read that the Disciples (according to the current and too common Opinion of their Country-men at that time) asked our *blessed Saviour*, John ix. 2. *Who did Sin, the Man himself, or his Parents, that he was born blind?* Now what does our *Saviour* say to this Question? Does he confirm them in this their Notion? No. *Jesus answered, neither hath this Man sinned nor his Parents, but that the Works of God should be made manifest in him.* He plainly tells them that this Calamity was

not

not on the account of any Sin that either this Man's Parents were guilty of, or that he himself had committed, as they seem'd to have imagin'd, in a state of *Pre-existence*.

THUS where a Calamity is very reasonably suppos'd to have arriv'd by a *special Providence*, we see even in this *strongest Case* an instance, where it was not *properly and merely Punitive*. The Divine Wisdom sent this Affliction and Blindness for a very different purpose, *viz.* that it might in its Consequences, the miraculous Cure of it, be a sensible Argument both to that Man himself, and to many others, to acknowledge the *Divine Mission* of CHRIST, and to believe in him to Salvation. Certainly therefore it is very unjustifiable and arrogant in us to charge or account Men as great Sinners, merely because of some great Afflictions and Calamities which have befallen them, and which have arriv'd, for any thing we can know to the contrary, according to the common and ordinary course of Providence.

I AM not asserting that *all Applications whatever of Divine Judgments to particular Cases are absolutely forbidden*, having already observ'd, in the foregoing Discourse, that GOD does shew his animadverting on human Affairs, when he sees fit, by *special and judicial Providences*, and that he is still to be known by the *Judgments which he executeth*. There is a *lawful and innocent* Application of Divine Judgments to particular Cases, when it is made with *Soberness, Discretion and Modesty*; and when Men have taken all due care to be secure from offending against *Justice or Charity*. But the thing I am urging is, that it is very easy for Men

to mistake in this Affair, and to make false interpretations of Divine Providences, both *chimerical* and *injurious*; they are too apt to stamp their own *fond Conceits* with the sacred Image and Superscription of GOD's *Authority* and *Judgments*, if they are not greatly upon their guard both against the *wantonness of Fancy*, and against the *irregularity of their Affections and Passions*, which are ever ready to interpose themselves.

MEN's *rashness* and *hastiness* in such Applications do too plainly discover that disposition which Charity disclaims, of rejoicing in iniquity, of suspecting and groundlessly imagining the worst, instead of hoping and being ready to believe the best things. The effect of it is plainly uncharitable and cruel, to exaggerate and enhance the Calamities that have befallen a Man, by representing him to himself as a Mark of GOD's special Vengeance, and as made a Spectacle to the World on the account of some uncommon piece of Impiety or Wickedness. This is as it were to give *them Gall and Vinegar to drink* who are already full of Bitterness, and have the greatest need of Comfort. So it was in the case of *David*; he tells us it was like *a Sword in his Bones*, when his cruel Enemies ask'd him in his Affliction, *Where is now thy God?* As if these Afflictions were an Evidence that GOD was his Enemy, and that all his Profession of Piety was but Hypocrisy.

THU'S *Shimei* in particular treated him, upon occasion of the Distress and Calamity he was in by the Rebellion of his Son *Abalom*, for thus it was that *Shimei* cursed, 2 Sam. xvi. 7, 8. *Come out* (says he)

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he) *thou bloody Man, and thou Man of Belial*; the Lord hath returned upon thee all the Blood of the House of Saul in whose stead thou hast reigned, and the Lord hath delivered the Kingdom into the Hand of Absalom thy Son, and behold, thou art taken in thy Mischief—

MEN are probably never more dispos'd to make rash and uncharitable interpretations of other Mens Calamities, than where there is an *Enmity*, and where they can gratify a *revengeful Humour* by ascribing their Enemies Afflictions to a judicial Act and avenging Hand of Heaven.

THIS *Shimei*, as we read *ver. 5. was of the Family of the House of Saul*, and here it is very probable was the * Foundation of that Behaviour of his of which we are speaking. He look'd upon himself, had the *Succession* continu'd in *Saul's Family*, as in the way of all those Honours and Advantages which are usually attain'd by those of the *Royal Blood*; and when he found these hopes blasted by the translating of the Crown from the House of *Saul* to *David*, he ascribes the subsequent Calamities of *David* (which were indeed specially inflicted by the Hand of GOD, but upon quite another account, he ascribes them) to a judicial Act of GOD pleading his *Cause*; he concludes them to be *Divine Judgments* befalling *David* in his Quarrel and that of his *Family*; so that we see in this, as may be also seen in infinite other instances, that a proud, exasperated, revengeful Heart

* This is an observation I met with in the little Treatise before refer'd to of Dr. S. Ford upon *Divine Judgments*, a good Author to whom I acknowledge my self indebted, and particularly in this part.

is a very bad and presumptuous *Interpreter* of Divine Dispensations.

SOMETHING of this nature, of a dislike to Men on account of their Country, and somewhat different Customs or Interests, might possibly have a part in inclining the *Jerusalem Jews* to look upon those *Galileans* as remarkable Sinners, *whose Blood Pilate mingled with their Sacrifices*; for we may discern that the People of *Jerusalem* about our *Saviour's* time had a sort of contempt and dislike of the *Galileans*, and were but upon indifferent terms of Friendship with them. But be that as it will, for there are more Causes than one of wrong uncharitable interpretations of Events befalling Men, let us suppose that it proceeded from Dislike, from Pride and Contempt, or Malice, or that it proceeded only from indulging a *superstitious Fancy*.—We see that our *blessed Lord* takes the part of the *Sufferers*, and vindicates them against these *rash and uncharitable Censurers*. Suppose ye, says he, that these *Galileans* were Sinners above all the *Galileans*, because they suffered such things? I tell you, nay. Or those eighteen upon whom the Tower in *Siloë* fell, and slew them, think ye that they were Sinners above all Men that dwelt in *Jerusalem*? I tell you, nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

AND so the Conduct of *Job's* Friends, whose great Aim in their arguing was to induce *Job* to acknowledge his grievous and remarkable Sufferings to be judicial Acts of Providence, on the account of his very great Wickedness; this Conduct of theirs is expressly condemn'd by God.

WHEN

WHEN they dealt so roughly and uncharitably with him, he tells them what a different Usage they should have found from him if *their Souls had been in his Soul's stead*, and assures them, that though he could in such a case have spoken as they did to him now, and heaped up words against them, and shaken his Head at their Calamities as they used him, yet he would on the contrary have *strengthened them with his Mouth*; and the *moving of his Lips should have assuaged their Grief*. To him that is afflicted, says he, *Pity should be shewn*; and Nature says the same; and the Gospel does most evidently and frequently recommend to us a compassionate and charitable Temper: And as we are exhorted to *rejoice with them that rejoice*, so those that are in sorrow and afflictions it becomes us not by any means as *Christians*, or as Men, to revile them on this account, and by unwarrantable harsh Reflections to aggravate their Misery, but rather *to weep with them that weep*; to condole with them rather than insult over them: Christianity certainly obliges us to instruct, to admonish in Meekness and Compassion, to comfort them and pray for them, recommending them to the Mercy of God, without presuming to determine peremptorily and hardly of their Condition in regard to GOD, either as to this World or the Life to come.

THERE are oftentimes *Metaphysical* and *Scholastic* Arguments urg'd to prove GOD's over-ruling all Events whatever by a *special Act* of his Will in regard to each, which has a *Transiency* and *outward Effect*; so that no Event whatever comes to pass without his *particular Appointment and Intervention*. That all
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the Actions of Men, whether good or bad, are by him conducted with irresistible Influence; his Providence executing in the appointed time what his Wisdom had from Eternity decreed.

I THINK indeed that what several of the Schoolmen say of GOD's continual Concourse and Agency upon Nature is fanciful enough; but that they are outdone by those who have come after them; who have asserted, that it is GOD *who does every thing in his Creatures*, and have directly apply'd it to the *Actions and Wills of Men*; as the late Archbishop of Cambray for one instance amongst the *Romanists*; and a learned Advocate for such kind of Notions amongst the Reformed, * Dr. John Collins in his Discourses on the Subject of Providence, p. 552. gives an account from a great Divine in his Opinion, how God may be said to harden Sinners four ways. " But, says he, if we

* He has wrote a large Book concerning the actual Providence of GOD, a considerable part of which, no less than twenty Sermons, are concerning the *divine* or hard Chapters of it, in which an attempt is made to solve several Appearances of Difficulty in the Motions of Providence, and to vindicate the Justice, Wisdom, and Holiness of GOD, with the Reasonableness of his dealing in such Motions, as the Author himself express'd his Design in his Title Page. There are some who have a very great Opinion of it, and esteem it a very edifying and excellent Book. Every one must judge for himself. I have taken the Liberty to think and write upon the Subject with a wide difference from him, and at the same time I will allow that he was a Man of Learning, a great Divine in his way, and that

Si Pergama dextra

Defendi possent etiam hæc defensa fuissent.

He might have defended well the Scheme he goes upon, had it been as all capable of being defended.

“ rightly understand it, it is not of so much moment,
 “ whether we say that GOD hardens Men positive-
 “ ly or negatively : For tho’ as to the Execution in
 “ the Event, the Act be negative, yet this Event
 “ flows from the positive Purpose of GOD, and
 “ the Will of GOD is as effectual in his neg-
 “ tive as positive Actions. There is (says the same
 “ Author in another place, p. 116.) a Theological or
 “ Christian Fate, which is nothing but a Necessity
 “ of Event impos’d upon Things by the eternal Pur-
 “ pose and Counsel of God executed by his Provi-
 “ dence.” I will content my self with these two
 Quotations, where the Doctrine I am opposing (as
 representing Divine Providence unsuitably to the Na-
 ture of Things and Beings GOD has created) is
 pretty roundly and fully express’d. It would be
 much more irksom and tedious than difficult to pro-
 duce great Numbers of Citations from the Works of
 various Divines, both Reform’d and Romanists, who
 teach either directly or by plain Consequences the same
 Doctrines.

BUT if we may pass it as a whimsical Specu-
 lation of lesser moment, what has been advanc’d
 by some, that every Particle of the material
 World stands in need to be *continually re-produc’d*, or
 still *newly created* every moment of its Existence :
 Yet it becomes us to weigh and consider the Argu-
 ment more seriously before we say withal, that such
 of the Productions of GOD as are made in his own
 Divine Image, in some sort to represent himself,
 with a Principle and Power of acting within them-
 selves; that such Creatures are incapable of acting

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without

without GOD's continual interposing to produce their Acts every moment of their Duration, and that too whilst they are in a criminal and most sinful state of Life. It appears to me to be so very far from being necessary to the just and true Idea of Providence, that GOD continually interposes, even when Men commit wicked Actions, to *over-rule and controul* their Wills, and so *effect* the Event, that I think it absolutely inconsistent therewith, and incongruous to his *Wisdom*.

FOR *Sin* is a Breach of the *Divine Law*, in the giving of which Law, together with the Sanctions of it and their Application, the Divine Providence does principally consist. So that it is evidently inconsistent and absurd to ascribe Sin to Providence, as ordered or brought to pass by it, when that is the very thing that Providence designs and concerns it self so much to prevent, and to punish it in case it be not prevented.

THEY who maintain such kind of Opinions, insist much, I find, on the *active Nature* of GOD, and upon an Inference they draw in virtue of that *Postulatum* from his *Omnipresence*. It is allow'd, say they, on all hands, that God is *Omnipresent*, and wherever he *is*, he certainly *acts*; since his Nature, all his Perfections are *active*. *Deus est purus actus, totus actus*.

NOW it might be reply'd, in short, that there is too much of Scholastic and Metaphysical Subtilty in this Argument, to bear so great a Weight as they lay upon it, to establish a Point of so great Importance by it.

BUT

* ACT
rens in e
fed mag
q. 18, c

BUT however I will not decline entering further into the Matter, to examine what Strength there is in the Argument, and to consider what GOD's being of *an active Nature* may mean, and what is the import of the word *A C T*, when apply'd by learned Men to the *Supreme Being*. And this I look upon as the more necessary to be done, because many Persons, upon hearing such Terms apply'd to GOD, have seem'd to bring to the understanding of them, the Ideas they have form'd from the Observation of *Activity* in some busy Creature, who (*magno conatu magnas nugas agit*—) being defective both in Power and Wisdom, sometimes builds and sometimes destroys what he has already built, does and undoes, makes and mars, rather than he will be doing nothing and be out of *Action*.

THE Schoolmen by saying that God is a *pure Act* and the like meant to deny all *Imperfection* and *Passion* in the Divine Nature; they meant that GOD was so far from being subject to any Passion, that he was the very Source and Fountain of all Action, and therefore they thus express'd themselves that he was *purus Actus*, &c. even *Act it self*.

BUT then they do not always mean by the Word *Act* the vulgar Notion of it, that it infers an outward Effect, or Passion out of the Agent. * They expressly say there is Action that does not pass, operate, or

* Actio est duplex, una quæ transit in aliquid exterius inferens in eo Passionem; alia quæ non transit in rem exteriorem, sed magis manet in ipso agente, sicut intelligere & velle *in*. q. 18, &c.

make an Effect upon some other Being, or outward Thing, but remains within the Agent, as to *Understand*, to *Will*. † And T. Aquinas makes this to be the very Distinction betwixt a *Fact* and an *Action*; that the *former* implies a *Transiency* and Effect upon an outward Thing, but the *latter* denotes a *Permanency* in the Agent without such Operation and outward Effect, as to *See*, and to *Will*. Thus in the Language of the Schools it was, *e. g.* as well and as much an *Act* of GOD, when GOD *saw the Light that it was good*, as when he said, *Let there be Light and there was Light*; although there was this great Difference betwixt them, that the one was an *Act* which had a very great outward Effect, and *produc'd Things into Being*, and the other was an *immanent unoperative Act*, which only *ratify'd* and *approv'd*, but carry'd along with it no *Cause of Events*, no alterative Influence upon the new created Light. And thus, if we have a mind to speak with Schoolmen and learned Men, we shall call it an *Act* of GOD that he *sees* and *takes notice* of our Conduct and Behaviour; this we shall call an *Act* of GOD, as much as if we were describing his immediate and signal recompensing Rewards or Punishments to Men in consequence of that Inspection; or were describing any other *Divine Act* which has greatest *Transiency* and sensible Effects.

It is therefore no manner of Consequence from GOD's being allow'd to be *Omnipresent*, and being said withal to *act* wherever he *is*, that he *so acts* as

† Factio est Actus transiens in rem exteriorem: agere autem est actus permanens in ipso agente, sicut videre, velle & hujusmodi *1ma. 2da. Qu. 57. Art. 4.*

by a *special Intervention* to produce *all* the Effects and Events that are, even the wicked Actions of unreasonable and ungodly Men not excepted. I have shewn that we may believe the contrary without being led in Consequence of it to look upon GOD as an *unactive, indolent Being, unobserving and negligent* of human Affairs; or being in the least Danger of going into so *capital and fatal* an Error.

GOD has long since rested from the work of *Creation*, and he has from that primæval Date of the Creation establish'd *general Laws* of Nature, which are also general Laws and a part of his *Providence* as to its ordinary and outward Dispensations. So that as GOD does not now *create* any thing by an *immediate and proper Act* of Creation; neither does he produce Effects in the *material* World and outward Dispensations out of the ordinary Course by an *immediate Interposition and transient Act*, except it be in *extraordinary* cases, according to the RESERVATION he was pleas'd to make at the original Appointment of that *general Course of Laws*.

IT does not follow from GOD's having instituted an *Order and Course* of Nature, that he cannot with Consistency, and without Mutability, *do any thing at all* besides that Course of Nature, because his Wisdom foresaw there would be Reason and Occasions for special Interpositions; and therefore at the original establishing a general Order, (as is rightly observed by *Aquinas, 1ma. qu. 105.*) GOD establish'd it with a *Reservation* that he would so interpose whenever he saw meet and fit.

BUT

BUT still the Consequence may be, and is, I think, very good, that having appointed such an Order of Nature, it is not congruous to his Wisdom that he should *continually interpose in every thing in a special manner*, which *frustrates* that general Appointment, and renders it *wholly void and vain*.

ONE of our Divines of great Learning (whose Writings are much and very deservedly esteem'd) thinks it very necessary, I find, to assert a continual special Interposition of GOD—But I think he has represented the Argument of those whom he opposes with so much Weight, as all he says on the other side does not counterbalance.

FOR an Objection to be propos'd with more Clearness and more Strength than is seen in the solving of it, is what we need not be much surpriz'd at even in Writings of the best Account. No Care, no Acuteness of Wit, sets a Man out of the reach of, and clearly above this Weakness and Imperfection, incident to human Intellect, when furnish'd to the best Advantage. And it is remarkable, that this very thing of producing Objections too hard to be answer'd, has happened the ofteneft to a * Person of the acuteft Wit, as well as most remarkable Diligence of any of his Age, or perhaps of any other. But to the point, “The
“ Abettors of the mechanical Hypothesis argue (says
“ our Author Dr. *Jenkin*, *Reas. of Christian Rel.* vol. 2.
“ p. 199.) that GOD acts in the most general and
“ uniform Ways; that it is more becoming his Wisdom to let Nature have its Course; and that con-

* T. Aquinas.

“stantly to interpose would be a Disparagement to
 “the Order and Contrivance in his Establishment of
 “the Laws of Motion; that Matter and Motion are
 “with that Wisdom set to work, that they can per-
 “form all without any more than his preserving and
 “sustaining them in their Being and Operations;”
 I add, and his interposing in extraordinary Occa-
 sions.

THE main, or I think the whole Foundation of
 his Argument in answer hereto consists in this, that
 present Events are *Rewards* of Mens good, or *Punish-
 ments* of their evil Actions; and since it is impossible
 for these Events of themselves to apply and suit them-
 selves to the several States and Conditions of free
 Agents, it follows, that they must be so suited by
 the continual Interposition of GOD.

THERE is no doubt but the signal Favour and
 Blessing of GOD to eminently good Men, and a
 Divine *Nemesis* and Judgments of GOD upon some
 remarkably wicked Men, have been seen in all Ages,
 more or less frequently and surprizingly, as it pleased
 the Divine Wisdom; and so far the learned Doctor's
 Reasoning is good, that this did not and does not
 arrive from Matter of it self suiting its Motions to
 these Purposes, but it must be a Divine *special Inter-
 position*. But can we say that *all Events whatever* are
 design'd either as Rewards or Punishments peculiarly
 and specially suited to our Deservings? No, certain-
 ly. This Life is not the proper Time and World of
 Recompence, and the supposing such an exact Re-
 tribution here does (as I have before observ'd) ex-
 ceedingly weaken the Force of the best Argument we
 can

can use upon the foot of Reason for a future State of Recompence.

THERE is a notable Passage or two I have met with in a well known and well approved Author, very pertinent to our Subject and worth transcribing; "GOD has made, says he, (Dr. *Sherlock* on Judgment, p. 30.) a *standing Provision* for the orderly Government of the World in the *Nature of Things*, and that will serve the *ordinary* Ends of Providence; and when he sees Occasion for it, he can soon rectify any great Disorders by a more *immediate Hand*, which is most agreeable to the Wisdom and Majesty of Providence. Thus GOD governs the inanimate World, the Heavens and the Earth, and all Creatures therein, by keeping this great Machine in that regular and uniform Motion which he at first gave it, and suffering all Creatures to follow the Tendency of their own Natures, excepting such Cases as require some extraordinary and preternatural Events.—The less the Divine Providence deviates from the Nature of Things, whilst the World is well and wisely govern'd, the more admirable is his Wisdom, who has so contriv'd the World that he can govern all Creatures by the *Springs and Principles of their own Natures*. P. 44. Certainly GOD can govern his Creatures without offering a perpetual Violence to their Natures, which would be a great Blemish to his Wisdom in making the World, if he cannot govern it without *unmaking* it again. For to alter the Nature of Things (says he) is in part to *unmake* them.

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As to the common Objection, that it would follow from such Principles as I am asserting, that GOD is then oblig'd to follow his Creatures, and to *work after their Caprice*; or in the words of Dr. South, "That GOD must according to that Supposition either strike in with Things as they fall out, by postliminious after-applications of them to his Purpose, or by framing his Purposes to them." Possibly there may not be more or greater Inconveniences in the supposition and admitting of *Succession* and *Diversity of Thoughts* in GOD with respect to Beings, to whom he has given the free Conduct of their Actions, Beings who are both *free* and *variable*, than there are in what is commonly said of the *ETERNAL NUNC*, and *GOD's seeing all Things present at once*. It is a Consequence of the *Covenants* GOD has made with Man, that his Acts with reference to his Creatures thus covenanted with, who have *Duration* and *Acts successive*, should be *suit'd* to them, to their Duration and Succession.

THIS is a Consequence of the Liberty it pleas'd GOD to give his rational Creatures, and such as depends upon his own Institution. It is no ways incompatible with the Idea of a most *perfect Being*. Here is no variation suppos'd of GOD's *essential Ideas* or *Attributes*; and for the rest which is here suppos'd, GOD's *Unchangeableness* does not appear to be more affected or call'd in Question, than his *Omnipresence* is when it is admitted that he *cannot lye*, or do any other Things that are contrary to his pure and holy Nature.

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AGAIN;

AGAIN, it may be objected, that if GOD does not *specially interpose* in every Event, then Mens *Prayers*, how pious soever they be, have not always Effect or Significancy, nor ever but when there is that *special Interposition*; because if things come to pass only by a *general Order of Providence*, they are then the *same* as would have been, whether we had pray'd or not.

NOW a *Fatalist* need not upon his Principles make this any Objection, and may only say, as in other cases, that GOD did from Eternity foresee and decree both the one and the other, and suit them together; but I do not claim the Benefit of this Solution.

I PROPOSE to solve this Difficulty, so far as the Scheme I go upon is affected, in a very different way.

FIRST we will *suppose*, that there is no Effect or Event *outwardly* produc'd by GOD's *special Agency*, in consequence of *some* Prayers of good Men; that there is no *Act of GOD*, but what the Schools call an *immanent Act*, whereof there is no *outward Effect*.

YET it will not follow as a certain Consequence, that the *Prayers* of a good Man are *vain*, nor even *unanswer'd*. It is Prayer (not every Prayer, but the fervent Prayer of a good Man) that is the ordinary Means, even upon this Supposition, of obtaining the commonest temporal Blessings, *as Blessings*, as confirm'd and ratify'd by GOD's paternal special Regard.

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IT is a just Inference from the Contemplation of the Divine Attributes, that GOD does *especially* approve the ordinary Effects of his *general* Providence, which suit to the Wants and Prayers of good Men; that he ratifies these by a *special Act* of his Will, when yet there may be, according to our present Supposition, no *such Act* or Agency of GOD, as produces any *outward Effect and Event*.

GOD sees the *ordinary* Effects of Nature and Providence, which suit to the Wants and Prayers of good Men, as he did the *Light* and other Works of the Creation, *that they are good*; and he confirms this general Blessing to those that call upon his Name, by immediate and direct Approbation.

GOD, as he makes his Sun to rise, and the Rain to fall upon the Just and upon the Unjust, so may he suffer *other temporal Comforts* ordinarily to fall as * *indifferently* into the Hands of the one or the other of them. And if we cannot come to a certain Deter-

P. S. To the very same purpose I find an Observation of the Person who styles himself Theophilus, in a Letter publish'd sometime since in the London Journal, in Vindication of a Divine Providence; and wrote in a manner that can give no suspicion of treating his Subject unseriously or with too great a Latitude. " It does not import us, " says he, to know or enquire what indeed is not to be known (that " is, not at all times, or with any certainty) when and in what manner " GOD displays his Providential Power, or what particular Events " are brought about thro' the Interposition of it, and what are produced from the ordinary Tenor of Things, and their natural Relation to one another.—It does not import us to know this, nor ought " we to be over-free in passing our Judgments about it; it is enough " to be satisfy'd in general, that God does truly interest himself in our " Affairs and for our Welfare.

mination, whether some desireable and happy Events have arriv'd by *extraordinary and special*, or in the *ordinary* Course of Providence, we need not trouble our selves that we cannot make a *particular and explicit* Acknowledgment of them to GOD, *This* as a *general*, and *That* as a *special* Favour, as it might become us to do if we had so particular and exact a Knowledge.

How desirous soever we may be of distinguishing exactly and certainly extraordinary from ordinary Providences, I doubt we cannot be able to *fix a Rule*, and with that niceness as to determine absolutely in this Point all Particulars, either as to public Affairs, or our own private Concerns. We have rather Means and Helps of *Conjecturing*, than any certain *Rule* of *peremptory* and *absolute Determination*. And perhaps there is no better Ground to believe a *special Providence* has interven'd in any Affair of *public* Nature, the Advancement suppose of a Person to Power and Dignity, than the Observation that his Advancement and Conduct has *great Effects*; and *far-spread happy influences*; nor better ground to believe the like in ones own *private* Concerns, than when we have done or are doing *eminent Good* with Power, Favour, Wealth, &c. which we have arriv'd to, and that perhaps in an unlook'd for way, or in degrees beyond our Expectations.

If it be believ'd, and sufficiently consider'd, that GOD does *specially confirm and ratify* his general Blessings to good Men; that he does most certainly and accurately *observe* the ill use the wicked make of these his *common* Favours, with purpose severely
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to punish that Abuse; and also observes as exactly the pious and good Man's quite different use of them, purposing to bestow on him eternal Rewards for his good Improvement of those inferior Talents of Wealth, or Power, or other worldly Goods put into his hands; certainly the *latter* does not want sufficient Motives to be thankful, even where he has no sure Evidence of *special Interpositions* in his Favour, any more than *the former* can justly be thought not to have Reason to fear and to amend himself, that so he may escape the Wrath to come. It is the manifest *Interest*, as well as *Duty* of them both, to conciliate the Divine Favour, and *propitiate* Heaven by their continual and fervent Prayers; seeing it appears by what has been already said, that the fervent Prayer of a righteous Man is not ineffectual, but *availeth much*, even where there is *no outward Agency* of GOD in consequence of it.

HERE therefore is a Foundation, as to *external* Things, at once for our *Prayers* and for our *Endeavours*. For Relief and Prosperity therein are, as we have seen, the Consequences at the least of a *general Blessing*, and are *ratify'd* and *approv'd* when they arrive to good Men by *special Acts of GOD's Will*; tho' not such as produce any outward Effects. It may be proper also to observe, that *Prayer* is useful in its own Nature, and of Advantage as an Act of Obedience to the Divine Precepts. For these Notions of *Divine Providence* are good Motives, and ought in Reason to animate our diligent *Endeavours* within the Bounds of Moderation and Piety; because as our *Diligence* and *Industry* is a Matter of Divine Precept

as well as *Prayers* are, and is indeed necessary to and imply'd in all *sincere* and *honest Prayers*; so it is apparent enough that GOD is not wont to *work Miracles*, or to exert his Power in *extraordinary Providences* to relieve or support those, who neglecting their incumbent Duty, and flying every thing that has any face of Difficulty, are for covering their *Sloth* with the Cloak of *Religion and Piety*, and choose rather idly to *talk of trusting Providence*, than to be *doing* what Reason and the *Laws* of GOD (which make a *part of Providence*) prescribe and dictate to be their Duty.

AND thus also in relation to *internal Things*, whilst a Person prays for any *Grace*, and has not such a hypocritical *Reserve* as one of the *Fathers* speaks of, when the Lips utter'd a Prayer for Conversion, and the Heart said at the same time; *not yet, Lord, not yet*—Whilst a Man prays for any *Grace in earnest*, without hypocrisy and contradiction, he *resolves* so to endeavour, and so to practise to the best of his Power: He *makes a Resolution* to live holily and virtuously, and this not in a light and trifling manner, but a solemn *Resolution* and *Vow* in the presence of GOD so to act and live, is included in every *serious and real Prayer for Grace*. And though good *Resolutions* have been too often broke, yet none ever thought that the serious *making* good Resolves, together with the frequent *remembering* and *renewing* of them, is not conducive to a good Life.

A MAN's *praying to GOD* may be resembled to a Man's holding forth his Hand in order and in hope to receive a Gift. If a *Creature*, one of our selves,

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that abounds with good Things, be of a beneficent Nature in general, and conceive a good Opinion of an indigent Person that applies for his Bounty, the Gift is convey'd to him upon his proper Application; he reaches out his Hand himself, but his Benefactor fills it: So is Prayer with its requisite Conditions, the *appointed Means* for Men to obtain the *heavenly Boon* we are speaking of. And as a Man, however beneficent and charitable, would with-hold his Bounty from one who was either *too proud* to reach out his Hand to receive a Gift, or *too idle* to lift it out of his Bosom to help himself in any other case; so may we reasonably think that GOD will with-hold his Grace from them that proudly depend upon their own Strength, and in direct Disobedience to his Injunctions refuse to pray for it; or that are so slothful or inconsistent with themselves as to separate from their *Prayers*, what naturally accompanies them when sincere, and that is their *suitable Endeavours*.

BUT to proceed to another Consideration, I would not be thought to argue for, nor does the Scheme I go upon require I should defend this Proposition, That the Prayers of good Men are *never* answer'd, or indeed that they are not *many times* answer'd by the immediate Intervention of GOD, and *special operative Wills* that produce *outward Effects*, or in other words, by a *special Agency of GOD*.

AND therefore as we have advanced further in observing, that the Wisdom of GOD has *not only* so order'd Things as that the *ordinary Course* of Nature does commonly *suit and quadrate* to the ordinary

ry Wants and Prayers of Mankind; but when they *do not* so suit, there is a Provision for this, and Relief from the *special Providence* of GOD, whether *External* or *Internal* on Mens Hearts, so here accrues from this Consideration a great additional Force to the Motives encouraging our *Addresses* to Heaven.

FOR, tho' the Prayers of good Men should be conceiv'd to be *oftentimes*, or *mostly* perhaps in regard to *outward Things*, answer'd in the manner already describ'd; by finding Acceptance with GOD, and by his *confirming* the general Blessings of Providence *determinately* to those Persons by a *special approving Will*: Altho' GOD does often, while he sees the *Course of Nature* go counter to their Prayers, suffer it to be so for Reasons of his Wisdom, and fully consistent with his Goodness towards them. Yet if he should see the ordinary course of Nature and Providence, was about to involve a good Man in Circumstances *peculiarly* unsuitable and dangerous; in Temptations *beyond what are commonly intended by his general Appointment of Things*, we must not doubt but GOD will hear this Man crying to him in his Distress, and will *make a way for him to escape* by a *special Intervention*; either by *outward Providence*, or by *inward Grace*.

THE latter of these, the happy Influences of GOD's Grace, as it is that we ought *principally* and *most ardently* to pray for, so we may reasonably indulge the pleasure of believing, that his *special Interpositions* in our Favour are *most frequent* in this respect; that GOD is pleas'd to observe that himself in his dealings towards us, which he so much recommends

to us to do, *viz.* to prefer the *proper* Interests and Concerns of our *Souls*, to such Matters as the Soul is concern'd in only in its present State, and by occasion of its Union with the Body; that the most valuable Gift of all, his heavenly Grace, by which, if it be not our own faults, we may acquire his Favour and eternal Happiness, is more commonly presented to us than immediate *outward* Dispensations of special Favour. And tho' Prayer has in the very Nature of it an Aptitude hereto; and a Tendency to beget and improve Virtue and the Divine Image in Men, yet it is fit to be observ'd withal, that the principal and proper Efficacy of Prayer to obtain Grace, is without dispute in virtue of GOD's Appointment of the one, and his Promises of the other.

I OBSERVE here with pleasure, and I cannot but look upon it as an *Instance* of the *Efficacy* of Mens Prayers for *Divine Assistances* and *Illumination*, that the Man who taught the *Truths of GOD*, the great Truths both of *Natural* and of *Reveal'd* Religion, with the most *eminent Felicity* of any in the Age (to say no more) in which he liv'd, that this Person *pray'd* we *know* in the most *excellent Words* for GOD's *Illumination* and *Assistances*, and we *ought to suppose* it was with a *Frequency* and *Earnestness* that became an Ardent but regular and even *Piety*, and that was agreeable to the best of Characters in all Points.

THE *Prayer* I mean is printed at the End of one of the Volumes of that great Man Archbishop TILLOTSON's Sermons; but as it cannot be too often publish'd, and I imagine I shall do a pleasure in it to my Readers, such especially as have not that Book at

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hand, I will here transcribe it for them, and at the same time recommend it to their Use.

O LORD GOD of Truth, I humbly beseech Thee to enlighten my Mind by thy Holy Spirit, that I may discern the true way to eternal Salvation, and to free me from all Prejudice and Passion, from every corrupt affection and interest that may either blind or seduce me in my search after it.

MAKE me impartial in my enquiry after Truth, and ready whenever it is discover'd to me to receive it in the Love of it, to obey it from the Heart, and to practise it in my Life, and to continue stedfast in the profession of it to the End of my Days.

I PERFECTLY resign my self, O Lord, to thy Conduct and Direction, in confidence that thy Mercy and Goodness is such, that Thou wilt not suffer those who sincerely desire to know the Truth, and rely upon thy Guidance, finally to miscarry.

AND if in any thing which concerns the true Worship and Service of Thee my GOD, and the everlasting Happiness of my Soul, I am in any Error and Mistake, I earnestly beg of Thee to convince me of it, and to lead me into the way of Truth, and to confirm and establish me in it daily more and more.

AND I beseech Thee, O Lord, always to preserve in me a great Compassion and sincere Charity towards those that are in Error and Ignorance of thy Truth, beseeching Thee to take pity on them, and to bring them to the Knowledge of it that they may be saved.

AND

AND because our blessed Saviour hath promised, that all who do his Will shall know his Doctrine, grant, O Lord, that I may never knowingly offend Thee in any thing, or neglect to do what I know to be thy Will and my Duty.

GRANT, O heavenly Father, these my humble and hearty Requests, for his sake who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, my blessed Saviour and Redeemer, *Jesus Christ*.

[P. S. SINCE I had form'd my Notions as above, I have read a Discourse on *Nature and Grace*, written indeed long ago by a celebrated * Author, who speaks very much of GOD's acting by *general* and *not* by *particular Wills*. P. 20. "The Laws of Nature, says he, are always most simple and general, for GOD acts not by *particular Wills*, unless Order requires a *Miracle*. Thus when a Stone falls on the Head of a good Man, it falls in consequence of the Laws of Motion. So likewise when Light breaks in to the Understanding, it is because we hear some intelligent Person, &c. and not that GOD has a *particular Will* on our behalf, but that he follows the *general Laws* of Nature, to which he has oblig'd himself. P. 12. He says, there are very few Truths that would admit of greater Probation than this, that GOD acts *not by particular Wills*." He means in the common Events relating both to *Nature*, and the ordinary Dispensations of *Grace* too. "For indeed every thing in Nature proves this, says he,

* Malbranch.

“ except *Miracles*, which yet would not be Mira-
 “ cles, or different from those we call *natural Effects*,
 “ if it were true that GOD acted by *particular*
 “ *Wills*, since Miracles are such only from their not
 “ arriving by *general Laws*. Therefore Miracles sup-
 “ pose these Laws, and prove the Opinion I have
 “ establish’d. But as to *ordinary Effects*, they clear-
 “ ly and directly demonstrate *general Laws* or *Wills*.
 “ If, *e.g.* a Stone be dropp’d upon the Head of Pas-
 “ sengers, it will continually fall with an equal speed,
 “ not distinguishing the Piety, or Quality, or good
 “ or ill Disposition of those that pass. If we exa-
 “ mine any other Effect, we shall see the same Con-
 “ stancy in the Action of the Cause of it.” And
 here he takes notice that Men partly from Self-love,
 and partly out of Ignorance, are inclin’d to fancy
 that GOD acts by *particular Wills*, and is constantly
 working Miracles in their Favour.

Ibid. “ They who ascribe to GOD *particular*
 “ Designs and Wills, for all the particular Effects
 “ produc’d in consequence of *general Laws*, common-
 “ ly employ the Authority of the *Scriptures* to justi-
 “ fy their Opinion. But the *Scriptures* being made
 “ for all the World, for the simple as well as the in-
 “ telligent, it abounds with *Anthropologies*: It not
 “ only ascribes to GOD a *Body*, a *Throne*, a *Chariot*,
 “ *Equipage*, *Passions* of Joy, Sorrow, Wrath, Re-
 “ pentance, and other Motions of the Soul, but also
 “ attributes to him the customary Ways of *human*
 “ *actings*; that it may speak to the simple in a more
 “ sensible manner. Thus St. Paul, to accommodate
 “ himself to the World, speaks of the Sanctification

“ and

“ and Predestination of the Saints, as if GOD continually work’d in them by *particular Wills*, and even *Jesus Christ* speaks of his Father, as if he took care by *such like Wills*, to adorn the Lilies, and to preserve every Hair of the Head of his Disciples; because in truth the Goodness of GOD to his Creatures being extream, these Expressions afford a great Idea of it, and recommend GOD to the Affections of the grossest Souls. Yet as by the Idea we have of GOD, and by the Passages of *Scripture* conformable to that Idea, we correct the sense of *other Texts* which attribute to GOD *Members* and *Passions* like ours; so when we would speak with exactness of the Manner of GOD’s acting in the order of *Grace* and *Nature*, we ought to explain those Passages which make him act as a *natural* or *particular Cause*, by the Idea we have of his *Wisdom* and *Goodness*, and other *Scripture* Passages comporting with that Idea. For in fine, if we may say, or rather if we are oblig’d to say from the Idea we have of GOD, that he causes not every drop of Rain to fall by *particular Wills*; tho’ the obvious sense of some *Scripture* Passages authorises that Opinion, there is the same necessity to think, notwithstanding some Authorities of the *Scriptures*, that GOD gives not by *particular Wills* to some Sinners all those good Motions which are useless to them, and which would be useful to several others. For otherwise I see not how it is possible to reconcile the *Holy Scripture* either with Reason or it self.

THIS does in Part corroborate, and is of a Piece with what I have said; but I likewise observe, that in Part also, it is very *different* from my Notion, as he supposes, that GOD does *not* give INTERNAL ASSISTANCES to Men by *particular Wills*, and therefore is oblig'd to interpret innumerable Passages of Scripture concerning the Influence and Agency of the *Holy Spirit*, in a manner new and exceedingly strain'd. He makes the *same Objection* in order to answer it against his Supposition, as I had done, *viz.*

“ THAT it makes all Prayers useless, and robs Men
“ of the Confidence they ought to have in GOD,
“ since in the Objector's Notions, GOD acting
“ by *general Wills*, we must not expect *particular Sup-*
“ *plies* from Heaven.

AND he says, that “ *If this Consequence is inclu-*
“ *ded in his Principles, they would be false, hereti-*
“ *cal, and impious.*

I MUST own, he says but very little, to shew that this Consequence is *not* included; and what he does say seems to me to be built upon a very singular and fanciful Notion, *viz.* “ That tho' GOD does not
“ act by *particular Wills*, yet the *Soul of Jesus Christ*
“ does; and thus our *Prayers* will solicit *Jesus Christ*
“ to form some *Desires* relating to us; and his *De-*
“ *sires* are the occasional Causes which infallibly *de-*
“ *termine the general Law of Grace*, by which GOD
“ wills the Salvation of all Men in his Son.

IF a Man *totally* denies, that either *temporal* good Things, or Dispensations of *Grace*, and *divine Aids*, are vouchsaf'd to Men by *particular Wills*, I see not how such *Reveries* as these can help him to *pray with Faith*, and hope for either of them. I

I HOPE what I have said in answer to this Objection, in Reference to the Prosperities or Calamities of *this Life*, has more Solidity in it; and I am not affected by it as it relates to GOD's *Grace* and *internal Assurances* to Men, which I suppose (contrary to the aforesaid Author) to be very frequently vouchsafed by the *immediate Influences of God's Spirit*, and by *particular Wills*.

I SEE no Necessity of calling the immediate Agency and Influence of *Spirits upon Spirits*, and particularly of the FATHER OF SPIRITS upon the *human Soul*, whilst embody'd, *Miracles*, though it be by *particular Wills*. *Miracle* is a Word, the Import of which is not very precisely fix'd: Different Persons sometimes mean *different Things* by it. But if such immediate Divine Influences and Assurances to the Souls of Men may, with any Propriety, be call'd miraculous; yet, I presume, I may now assert (having before produc'd my Reasons for it) that they ought by no means to be deny'd.]

LET US now relieve ourselves a little, and yet without losing Sight of our Argument, by some Remarks upon the *antient Poets*, several of them, and more especially upon *Homer*, as to their *Representations of a Divine Superintendence and Agency in human Affairs*. They were wont to introduce *Deities* so frequently into their *Tragedies*, or other Poems, not always out of true Piety, or in a manner apt to excite it, but partly to surprize, and raise the Admiration of the Audience or Readers, or to set Things right, where their Wit otherwise cou'd not, or where they wou'd not be at the Pains to extricate themselves out of
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some *Inconvenience*, their manner of treating their Subject had brought them into.

THIS was so common a thing in *Horace's* Days, that he thinks it necessary, as a *Critic*, to give the *Poets* a Caution not to over-do, and be too free in this Machinery; not but that he introduces the *Gods*, and supposes their *special Interventions* pretty freely in some of his own Performances, tho' he was, as the Learned tell us, a Follower of *Epicurus*, and had no more Religion than what would fit very easy upon a *Good Companion*, a *Courtier*, and a *Man of Pleasure*. And that this was not a *new* thing in *Horace's* Time, we may perceive by the Works themselves of the Old Poets that are extant, or by that Remark of *TULLY*, (a shorter Method) where he makes *Vel-leius* say, *Quod quia quemadmodum Natura efficere sine aliquâ Mente possit non videtis; ut tragici Poetae, cum explicare Argumenti exitum non potestis, confugitis ad Deum*; which Comparison had been made also by *PLATO* long before, as *ERASMUS* and others have observ'd.

BUT the *Critic*, even in that Capacity, and much more if he had really had a good Sense of Piety, should have added another Caution and Rule to the Poets, That whenever they did, upon any Occasion, introduce a *Deity*, they should do it *Διοπτριπῶς*, suitably to the Perfections Mankind ought to suppose in a *Deity*; which it is very easy to shew, the most celebrated, antient *Poets* have not always observ'd; for which reason their Sentiments and Expressions ought to be *scann'd*, before they be so greatly commended, or any Arguments of Weight be grounded on them.

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I DO not mean to deny that they have express'd many Sentiments of this Sort very piously and decently; and such general Acknowledgments of Persons, in all Places and Ages, is one of the Arguments which I have made use of in asserting a DIVINE PROVIDENCE. But withal, I think it is very necessary to make Distinctions, and not to include all they have said of the Agency of the Gods under the venerable Name of PROVIDENCE.

PROVIDENCE and FATE may not be inconsistent, when the latter is understood in the Platonic Sense, only as that Part of GOD'S PATERNAL GOVERNMENT, which consists in RECOMPENSING to free Beings according to their Demerits, suitable to their Regard or their Disregard to the LAW which the WISDOM OF HIS PROVIDENCE had given them. But to build a Providence upon or together with an Homeric Fate, a Fate to which the Deity itself is subject, is indeed an extraordinary Attempt, and will require an equal Degree of Skill, or sort of Genius, that it does to cement Materials of the most irreconcilable Antipathies, or to support a Fabric by undermining its Foundation.

AS to HOMER I say in particular, and his ascribing all kind of human Actions to a Divine, overruling Power, I shall neither be injurious to him nor singular when I say, that the particular Representations are so far from being proper and decent, that they are oftentimes insufferably gross and monstrous.

MR. Pope, who may reasonably be suppos'd to have as great a Veneration for Homer as any Person what-

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ever, is yet oblig'd to confess, * That " he cannot
 " be defended in every thing as a *Theologift* ; and that
 " the Fable, or Machinery, which was admitted to
 " procure the Pleasure of Surprize, does sometimes
 " violently oppress the Moral—— That in many
 " Passages † *Homer's* Notions and Descriptions must
 " be own'd to be unworthy of the *Divinity*." He
 says indeed in another Place, that " ** whatever
 " Cause there might be to blame his Machines in a
 " *Philosophical* or *Religious View*, they are so perfect in
 " the *Poetic*, that Mankind have ever since been con-
 " tented to follow them."

If they are to be blam'd in a *Philosophical* and *Religious View*, no Beauties in *Point of Poetry*, nor Notions about it can, in my Apprehension, justify or atone for *this Fault* ; and it is under this Persuasion that I venture to say what I do, whilst I am not ignorant how obnoxious such a Freedom may render any one to the *Ridicule* of some *Beaux Esprits*, and that one of them has observ'd of those who have been so audacious as to find *Fault with Homer*, that *the Muses have always taken Care to revenge their Favorite*.

It is confess'd that †† *Homer* was severely censur'd by the *first* CHRISTIANS, as the Father in a great Measure of the heathenish Follies ; and that PLATO, who expell'd him his Common-wealth, has of all the Philosophers found the best Quarter from the FATHERS for passing that Sentence. Whatever Pretensions *they* might have had for their Severity of

* Essay on *Hom.* p. 56, 58.

† Note in p. 197. Vol. II.

** See the Preface.

†† See Mr. Pope's Essay on *Homer*.

Censure on our Poet, it is thought that Christians however in *these Ages* have no occasion to follow their Example. *But the Argument, that Homer's Books are now no longer the Scheme of a living Religion,* is not sufficient I think and satisfactory, unless it cou'd be truly asserted withal, that the Sentiments of those who are *Christians*, and very far from embracing his *whole Scheme* of Religion, were never in *some Points and Degree* vitiated by reading *Homer* with too great a Fondness, and without a proper Caution; or that they never us'd or imitated his Expressions about his *Fate* and his *Gods* upon *such Occasions* where nothing that is not *serious* can in the least be *decent*.

There is surely too much Ground for such a Remark, when *Pagan Impiety* does sometimes so glaringly strike our Eyes, and force itself upon us in our *Churches* amidst our *solemnest Devotions*; when the *importune and ostentatious Marble* tells us, whether we will or no, that *a lovely Child was hasten'd to Heav'n by his too great VIRTUE, and the Envy of the Fates, for ever to be lamented*;

H. P. S. E.

: : : :

Formâ paritèr & ingenio præstans,

Quem

Ineunte sexto jam Ætatis anno,

Et nimia Virtus,

Et Fatorum invidia (heu semper deßenda!)

In Cœlum evexere——

Or that

The God of Battel found in foreign Parts

The Son of *Hermes*, form'd for peaceful Arts;

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And

And thought it lawful Prize to take his Blood,
Because so near a Warrior King he stood.

As what I have mention'd is but a *Specimen* that first occur'd, and an instancing of a *few* out of a *great Abundance*, it may be recommended to our SUPERIORS, to the RIGHT REVEREND THE BISHOPS, and particularly to the BISHOP OF LONDON, and I do here with Earnestness, as in a Matter of great Importance, *wherein the Honour of CHRIST and his Religion is concern'd*, humbly recommend it to them to put a Stop to this *profane Custom*, and to rectify it by such Methods as shall be agreeable to their *Piety and Wisdom*.

THE *Political Zeal* of a *late Prelate* descended somewhat low indeed, to erase *Milton's Name* out of a fine Inscription in *Westminster Abbey*; but surely the Names of *Mars*, of *Hermes*, of *Envious Fates*, and such other Monsters may be demolish'd without any Danger of being replac'd by the Order, or with the Consent of a *succeeding Bishop*.

I W O U ' D not propose such a *Herculean Labor* to be put upon those who shou'd receive their Orders, as to erase *all the Nonsense* that our monumental Marbles are charg'd with; but I hope I may be justify'd in making this Proposal, to have *Profaneness* and the *worst Sort of Heathenish Impiety* banish'd out of THE HOUSES OF GOD, Let it be enough! if perhaps it be not too much, what the *eminent Poet and Critic* I have above nam'd says, and without any Danger of Contradiction, that *Homer's Gods have kept their Ground, and continue the Gods of Poetry to this Day!* And thus I have enter'd my *Caveat* against admitting

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admitting them into, and for expelling them at the least out of our CHURCHES; and have shewn at the same time that the *Argument* I am upon, is not so very trifling as some may possibly have imagin'd.

I HOPE therefore I may be permitted to give a *Caution*, that Men may not unwarily be led to conceive any Idea's less suitable to the Divine Perfections by Poetical and especially Homeric Representations of Deities, their Interventions and Agency in human Affairs, which is all that I concern myself about, having no Desire, if my Vote signify'd any thing, to have *Homer* banish'd, who may otherwise improve as well as please us; nor taking much Delight in a sort of Remarks that must be call'd ill-natur'd by those who will not be so favourable as to think they are made with an Intention to support what is conceived to be an important Truth.

Some learned Men have observ'd with much Satisfaction that the Word *τύχη* is not to be found in all *Homer's* Works, because *Fortune* is a Word which if it signifies any thing certain, does convey an Idea altogether inconsistent with the true Notion of *God's Providence*. And yet it comes very near both to the Word and Thing, where *Juno* prohibited by *Jupiter* to intermeddle in the Battle betwixt the *Greeks* and *Trojans* submits, and says upon that Occasion to *Pallas*,

— Ἄλλῳ μὲν ἀποφθίδω, ἄλλῳ δὲ βιώτω
Ὅσκι τύχη — Ὅμ. Ἰλ. θ. l. 429.

— *Alius intereat, alius autem vivat*

Cuique uti forte obrigeris —

I CONFESS

I confess that which immediately follows seems not so well to suit with the Idea of Fortune (if we can fix it) or of *Chance*, as to be descriptive of what *Chance* cannot consist with, viz. an over-ruling divine Power and Influence in this very Point.

— κείνῳ δὲ τὰ αὖ φεγνέων ἐνὶ θυμῷ
Τρωῶσι τε καὶ Δαναοῖσι δικάλλεζω ὥς ἐπιαικίς.

In Mr. Ozell's Translation it is thus,

Let them whose Lot it is or fall or stand:

Let Jove on Greeks and Trojans work his Will;

And, as his Fancy bids, dispose their Fates.

Where his joining *Fancy* and *Fate* together has something hit the *Incongruity* that is visible in this Passage, tho' the Original expresses a *Chance* and *Uncertainty* yet somewhat plainer. However, if *Homer* speaks at once of *Chance* and of the particular Ordination of *Jupiter* in the very same *Affair*, the more accurate *Roman* Poet may bear him company, and partake with him in the Censure, who ascribes things in *directer* words to *Fortune*, which yet he represents as the Effects that proceeded from *Juno's* Anger, her Direction and Agency. The Passage will be produc'd below.

I WILL shew too in another very remarkable and full Instance, that *Homer*, if he has join'd *Fortune* and *Fate* together in the same Breath, has still other Company or Followers in so doing. For *Momus* in *Lucian* says to *Jupiter*, that now since *Fortune* is acknowledg'd for a *Deity*, no body will sacrifice to *Jupiter* and the rest of the ancient Gods, * knowing that if they

* Διαλ. Θεῶν Ἐκκλησία — ὥςτις εἰδὼς ἡμῶν εἰδὲ θύειν βάλειαι, εἰδὼς ὅτι καὶ μυρίας ἱκατέμβας παραστήσῃ, ὅμως τὴν τύχην πρᾶξαι τὰ μισμοφομεῖνα, καὶ ἂν ἐξ ἀρχῆς ἐκάστῳ ἐπικλώσῃ.

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should offer thousands of Hecatombs, still Fortune would effect the Things which were fated and fore-ordain'd to each Person from the beginning. Lucian, I will allow, did not believe that there was either a Fate or Fortune; but yet there is no reason to suppose that he did not represent here the *confus'd inconsistent Notions* that several Persons really had of such Things in his Time; and it must be some nearly resembling, if not these very Expressions probably, that were the *Foundation* of his witty Ridicule.

I HAD a mind to consult Mr. Pope's Translation, as I had before that of Mr. Ozell, of the above-mention'd Passage of *Homer*, not so much pleas'd with the Remark I had made as to exclude all *Timidity* about a Criticism I had never seen a hint of, and knew was opposite to the Assertions of many learned Men, where I find the Translation * thus,

*Triumphant now, now miserably slain,
They breath or perish as the Fates ordain;
But Jove's high Counsel full Effect shall find,
And ever constant ever rule Mankind.*

And behold the following Note! which if it robs me of the Glory that a little piece of Criticism might have had any Pretensions to, I am so far from following † *Martial's* Example in cursing those that had been beforehand with him in his good Thoughts, that I read it, as now I give it, with a great deal of Pleasure to see my own Thoughts rather *proleptically* ap-

* Vol. 2. p. 232.

† ——— Dii male perdant
Antiquos mea qui præripuere mihi.

prov'd and confirm'd than taken away from me by so ingenious and eminent a Person.

Ver. 531. *They breath or perish as the Fates ordain.*

“ The Translator has turn'd this Line in compliance
 “ to an old observation upon *Homer*, which *Macro-*
 “ *bius* has written, and several others have since fallen
 “ into. They say he was so great a *Fatalist* as not
 “ so much as to name the word *Fortune* in all his
 “ Works, but constantly *Fate* instead of it; but un-
 “ luckily it is not true, the word which they have
 “ proscribed being imply'd in the original of this
 “ ver. 430. *ὄσχε τὴν χη.*

BUT whether our Poet did, as many others since have very absurdly done, join a *Fortune* and a *Fate* together or not, it cannot be disputed or deny'd that he was a great *Fatalist*; and I believe * *Mr. Dryden* was not much out, when after consulting with his learned Friend *Sir Robert Howard* he acknowledges, that *Homer* (and so *Virgil* too) did represent *Fate* as superior to the Gods, and that *Jove* could neither defer nor alter its Decrees; which is the highest Degree and absurdest Absurdity of *Fatalism*. But I will not say that *Homer* represents *Fate*, or the Power and Agency of Deities in an uniform manner.

A GREAT † *Advocate* for our Poet and learned Critic, whom I shall often have occasion to mention or refer to in these *Remarks upon Homer*, has said, *Homer* manifestly teaches that “ *Destiny*, which never gives
 “ way to *Force*, gives way sometimes to *Sweetness*;

* See *Dedicat. and Notes to his Virgil*, p. 637.

† *Madam Dacier.*

and

* See a
Homer.

“ and that *Wisdom* may do a great deal oftentimes towards *changing its Decrees*”. If *Homer* does manifestly teach this, he teaches things that are *opposite and contradictory to one another*; but I believe we shall still be at a considerable loss to find *where* it is that he says any such thing, either *directly*, or even *indirectly*; for in the Passage that Note refers to there is not, so far as I can discern, the least Insinuation of any such matter. The Poet makes *Jupiter* say to *Pallas*, Il. 9. l. 39.

Θάρτα Τροτογένεια φίλον τέκος ἔνυ τι θυμῷ

Πρόφρονι μυθεσμαι, θέλω γ' τοι ἥπιόν εἶναι.

The Comment adds a Reason, which was never thought of I might dare to say, but it must be allow'd is not express'd by the Poet, viz. *for eternal Wisdom is not subject to the Laws of Destiny* *.

THIS is unaccountably gather'd from *Jupiter's* saying to *Pallas*, that he was not angry with her, because she behav'd herself modestly and discretely, which it seems *Juno* had not done then, nor scarcely ever at any other time in *Jove's* opinion; and indeed *Pallas* afterwards says such things of *Jupiter*, upon this same occasion, as Mr. Pope thinks do shock the Allegory more perhaps than any thing besides in the whole Poem. But to the main Point, which is indeed a very important one; I own I am surpriz'd at the Weakness of the Argument here made use of by so learned a Person; and I am the more confirm'd in the contrary Sentiment, that *Homer* does many times represent Fate as superior

* See a Note at the beginning of the 8th Book of Mr. Ozell's *Homer*.

to Jupiter himself, upon seeing so little said in his Vindication, by one who was so perfectly acquainted with him as *Madam Dacier* was. There is not a word of *Fate* in that part of this Book which precedes the Passage under Consideration.

JUPITER begins his first Speech to the Gods with bidding them listen to him, whilst he speaks what his Mind had conceiv'd, and forbidding that either God or Goddess should attempt to vacate his Word,

Κέλυσίε μευ, πάντες τε θεοί, πᾶσαί τε δαίμοναι,
'Οφε' εἶπω τὰ με θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι κελύει.
Μήτε τις ἔν θήλεια θεὸς τόγε, μήτε τις ἄρσεν
Πεισέτω διακέρσαι ἐμὸν ἔπος.

I could not but admire how both of the Gentlemen, I have already nam'd, came in their Translations to speak here so directly and strongly as they do of *Fate*. For thus the one,

Celestial States, immortal Gods! give ear,
Hear our Decree, and rev'rence what ye hear:
The fix'd Decree, which not all Heav'n can move;
Thou Fate! fulfil it; and ye Pow'rs! approve.

And thus the other,

Let none presume t' infringe what I shall say,
Nor cross my purpose; but let all submit;
That so with speed this Bus'ness I may end,
And my Decrees eternal execute.

The Notes to the latter help us to the Reason of this manner of Translating, or Paraphrasing, if it may come under either of those Names. "What shall I say?" "What Jupiter has said is irrevocable Destiny; and there is none but he can change it. This is what

"Horace

“ *Horace* very well comprehended, for he calls *Destiny*, *quod semel dictum est*, what has been said. [*My Decrees eternal*] which are that the *Greeks* should be ill-handled by the *Trojans*, and *Achilles* be honour’d.

BUT could it indeed have been made out here, what was attempted by so far-fetch’d an Argument, that *fatal Decrees* were at all spoken of, and that *Jupiter* chang’d them upon the agreeable behaviour of *Minerva*, neither of which does appear; yet even upon that supposition a *Subjecting of all and every of the Gods to FATE*, might still have been charg’d upon our Poet from other *Instances*, and his disagreement in that case from himself need not have deterr’d us from such an *Impeachment* of him; it being a thing too plain to be deny’d, that *Homer* frequently represents *Jupiter* as doing and ordering whatever he lists in the most *uncontrol’d and arbitrary manner*, altho’ at other times he cannot do *this or that thing* which he has a great *Inclination* to do, because he is *limited and control’d by DESTINY*.

BUT where he does not attribute Events to the *inevitable Decrees of FATE*, is there indeed so much *Piety and Propriety* in ascribing them upon every occasion to the *necessitating Will of the Divinity*? in ascribing the Actions of Men (as he does) to an *adventitious Impulse* that is *irresistible*, even where they are not so directly evil and immoral? Is there not *Impiety* or the grossest *Impropriety* in attributing to *HEAVENLY IMPULSES and the NECESSITATING WILL OF GOD*, such Actions or Passions as are plainly unreasonable and shameful?

THE Poet seems to take a great deal of Care that his Readers should not forget the *flight of an Army*, and *Consternation* at one time, as well as their *Courage* a little before or after, was caus'd by *Jupiter*. And therefore the *Critics* observe it, and as a *Beauty* in *Hom*er, that after he had very sufficiently signify'd this before, yet in mentioning the *flight of the Grecian Army* again in the beginning of the 9th Book of the *Ili*. he says, not barely $\phi\upsilon\zeta\alpha$, but adds the Epithet of $\Sigma\iota\sigma\tau\epsilon\sigma\iota\eta$ to it, to inculcate it, that it was *ex Deo* $\pi\epsilon\sigma\sigma\epsilon\sigma\alpha$, that it was caus'd by *Jupiter*. But not to dwell upon this, or enumerate other *Particulars*, let the instance rather be a very noted and celebrated Passage in the *beginning of the Iliad*, which relates to every Incident and *Action* throughout the whole *Work*, whether more or less important, or at least without any question to a great number of Incidents:

— Διὸς δ' ἐπ' ἐλεείτο βελή.

is the Passage I mean,

So were Jove's *Laws* fulfill'd,
where all grave and serious Persons have not equally discern'd a very useful and excellent *Moral and Instruction*. For PLUTARCH would not admit the most natural and obvious Signification of those words, the Sense in which they commonly were of old, and are now understood in, because he apprehended, it was a Sentiment that did not well consist with human Liberty or Divine Goodness. He thought it was a thing very far from Piety, to say that GOD was the Author and Original Cause of such things as the Poet there refers to by his direct Appointment. What therefore can PLUTARCH say with this Opinion, and with too great

great a Veneration at the same time for Homer to find fault with him? He says, that by JUPITER in that place we are to understand FATE; forgetting that if the Goodness of the Deity were any thing clear'd by this Explication, his Power was given away for it, and the Breach upon human Liberty at least as wide as ever it was on the former Supposition.

BUT waving these sort of Remarks, I cannot but look upon it as a gross fault in this Poet to represent his Deities, both Inferior and the Supreme, as concern'd in Men's evil Actions, and instigating them to vile immoral Thoughts, Expressions, and Conduct. Thus to mention an instance or two, both Phoenix and Ajax attribute Achilles's violent and extravagant Passion to the Impulse of some Deity. Il. i. l. 596.

Ἀλλὰ σὺ μὴ μοι τᾶντα νόσι φρεσὶ, μηδ' ἐσε δαίμων
Εὐλαῶθα τρέψειε φίλον.

But be not thou my Son thus obstinate;

Nor let some God averse to our Protection

Confirm the Indignation of thy Soul.

and soon after Ajax says to him, l. 632.

σοὶ δ' ἄλλ' ἄλκιον τε κακὸν τε

Θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι δεσὶ δέσων εἵνεκα κέρους

"Oins —

—Tibi vero incessabilem semperque

Iram in pectoribus Diu posuerunt gratia puella

Unius —

The Gods that unrelenting Breast have steel'd,

And curs'd thee with a Mind that cannot yield.

Mr. Pope.

I allow that all these Persuasions us'd to Achilles should suppose his Free-will, and Power to do what they urge him

him to. It is happy that *Fatalists*, and those who have such an Opinion of *GOD's Agency upon Mens Wills and Actions* as I am opposing, do not always carry their *Doctrine into Practice*, or pursue it to all its *Consequences*. *REASON* speaks so loud and strong, she forces herself to be heard, and her Voice drives away *Chimera's* for the *time and exigence*. But why then should they ever return? or what excuse is there for representing things so *variously and inconsistently*? For in general the Places where *Homer* represents *Jupiter*, or *inferior Deities*, as concern'd in *Mens immoral* and their *unwisest Actions*, (where it is often said that *Jupiter took away their Senses*) I believe *these*, if they were to be number'd, would far exceed *those* where they are describ'd as *giving Men Assistances*, or at least *exciting them to Virtue*, as has been hinted before in the *Chapter about Divine Assistances*.

IN the *first Iliad*, *Pallas* is dispatch'd from Heaven by *Juno* to prevent the ill Effects of *Achilles's Passion*, and to give him *good Instruction* upon the occasion, a part of which is this, l. 210.

Ἀλλ' ἄγε λῆγ' ἐροῖτο, μηδ' ἐζίφῃ ἔλκειο χεῖρ;
Ἀλλ' ἥτοι ἐπεσιν μὲν δνείδισον, ὡς ἔσεταί τιερ.

The force of keen Reproaches let him feel;

But sheath obedient thy revenging Steel. Mr. Pope.

As to *Jupiter's* not being able to sleep for thinking how he should honour *Achilles*, and do a mischief to the *Grecian Army*, and at last sending a false and pernicious *Dream* to *Agamemnon*, by which he is instigated to give the *Trojans Battle*; I shall consider it particularly in the *Sequel*; in the mean time whereas a *single Combat was agreed upon* to prevent a *Battle*; and

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and to end the whole Dispute both parties had *sworn*, that *Helen* should go to the Conqueror in this Combat (which none else were to intermeddle in besides *Menelaus* and *Paris*; when the former had conquer'd his Antagonist) and the *Trojans* were dispos'd to act according to *Justice* and the Obligations of their *Faith* and *Oaths*, *Jupiter* in this critical Moment is represented sending *Pallas* down to the *Trojan* Army, on purpose to excite them to *violate their Faith and Oaths*, and to urge on a Battle, which accordingly she did effect. And so far is the *Poet* from discovering the Absurdity of this, or endeavouring anyways to mollify or varnish it, that in the sequel he represents *Hector* ascribing publicly the fighting in violation of solemn Treaty and Oaths not to *human Perfidy*, but to the irresistible Will and Influences of *Jupiter*. The Original is thus, *Il. η. l. 69.*

Ὅρκια μὲν Κρονίδης ὑψίζυγος ἐκ ἐτέλεισεν,

Ἀλλὰ κακὰ φρονέων τεκμαίρεται ἀμφοτέρωστιν,

which in Mr. Ozell's Edition (the translation being of an anonymous Person) is english'd thus,

—Jove, who all human Things controuls,

Resolv'd to break the Truce so lately made,

New Plagues against both Armies meditates.

and Mr. Pope (sensible, I suppose, of the objection that might be made) softens thus,

Great Jove averse our Warfare to compose,

O'erwhelms the Nations with new Toils and Woes.

And thus he exemplifies in a particular Instance, what he gives as a general Character of *Jupiter* incidentally in another place, where he intimates that *Mars* can do nothing with Men till *Jupiter* has put them in a fighting

fighting disposition by the force of heart-devouring Discord.
Il. η. l. 209.

Ὅς τ' εἰσιν πόλεμόν δ' αὖ μετ' ἀνέρας ἔστι Κρηνίων
Θυμοβόρος ἱριδ' ὅ μιν εἰ ζυνέηκε μάχεσθαι.

This sort of Reflections are so natural and obvious, that not only *Christians* but *Heathens* too have often made them; and not only those amongst them who have the *best Character*, but even such as are commonly esteem'd (whether altogether justly or no I don't enquire) not to have been remarkable for their *Piety* or good *Morals*.

EPICURUS had a view chiefly to *Homer* no doubt, when he said that "Poetry tends to debauch Men by the Influence of Divine Example." *Epicurus*, tho' his Notions were extremely wrong in the point of *Providence*, yet was no *Atheist*; he taught, that the *Gods* were to be *reverenc'd* and *lov'd*, not out of *Hope* or *Fear*, but purely for the *Excellence* of their *Nature*; and there is a great deal of Reason to believe, that the *Reports* of his luxurious and dissolute Life were *false* and *scandalous*.

It may still be said, perhaps, that it is no great matter that one who *deny'd* a *Divine Providence* should make such kind of Remarks upon our Poet. But no such Exception can be made against the next I am going to name.

* *TULLY* in his first Book of *Tusculan Disputations* says, that *Homer* feigns such things as those are about *Ganymede*, &c. that he transfers *human* Things

* *Tusc. 1.* Fingebat hæc Homerus & humana ad Deos transferebat; divina mallem ad nos.

to the *Deity*, whereas it would have become him rather to have transferr'd *Divine Excellencies to Men*.

LONGINUS, as I find by a Passage of his alledg'd as a Parallel Place to that of *Tully* by his last * Editor, remarks, that *Homer makes his Heroes Gods, and his Gods Men*. That Note informs us also, that *Xenophanes* had observ'd the same thing, and refers us to *Menagius* upon *Laertius* ix. 18. where I suppose the curious may meet with more Remarks of this nature.

THE next I shall mention as blaming *our Poet* for the same Reasons, is † one who may be a good Critic, and make just Observations upon another's indecent manner of treating the most serious Things, altho' he might himself have but a small share of Seriousness, or it may be of Piety either. As to his Critique upon our Poet with respect to *Prayers*, my Judgment is that he, and PLATO indeed with HIEROCLES, have gone beyond the Medium, and been wrong in exploding the whole Notion of the *Deity's* being *appeasable by Prayer*, as well as right and just in their touching upon some incidental Things, and indecent Decorations, in relation to which he may be liable to their Censures.

WE may allow *Lucian* to laugh when the Poet represents *Minerva* as deferring the *Saccage of Troy* for the sake of a *Present* from the *Trojans* of a fine *Veil*, and the *Sacrifice of a dozen Oxen*.

HE observes that, since *Jupiter's* Custom (*i.e.* in the Poet's Representation) is not to bestow upon Men

* Dr. Davies.

† Lucian.

any Favors for nothing, it was very suitable the *Ethiopians* should be in a high degree of his Favor, since they entertain'd him sometimes for twelve whole Days together with all the rest of the Gods in his Attendance.

I KNOW the * *learned* have pleaded for our Poet here that he says in one place, *the Gods could not eat upon Earth nor devour human Repasts.*

Οὐ γὰρ σῖτον ἔδ' οὐδ' ἔπινον ἀϊθοπα οἶνον

Τρηνεὶ ἀναίμονές εἰσι, καὶ ἀθάνατοι καλίσσιναι.

But yet I do not look upon this as a sufficient Vindication of him from the foregoing Censures, unless upon a Supposition, which we are not any ways oblig'd to admit, *viz.* that *Homer* is every where perfectly consistent.

A GREAT deal more may be seen in this Author to the same purpose of ridiculing other Passages in *Homer*, where Men are represented as putting Obligations upon the Gods by their Gifts and Sacrifices, usually added to their Prayers; as for instance *Chryses* demanding of *Apollo*, as by way of Debt, that he should do for him what he asks. *Iliad* α. l. 39. & seq.

Σμινθεῶ ἄπολέ τοι χαρμέντ' ἐπὶ νηὸν ἔρπυα

Ἡ εἰ δ' ἡ πόλε τοι καλὰ πύονα μηρ' ἔκκη

Τάυρων ἢ δ' αἰγῶν, τόδε μοι κρήνην ἐέλδωρ·

Τίσσιν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δ' ἄκρυα σοῖσι βέλεισσιν.

Great God, whose fatal Arrows are so dreadful!

If ever I adorn'd thy Shrine with Garlands;

If e'er thou wast delighted with the Blood

Of Bulls and Goats, in pious Sacrifice

* Dr. Bentley.

Offer'd by me upon thy holy Altars :

Attend my Prayers, and grant my humble Suit.

Let the proud Grecians feel thy angry Shafts ;

And taste Affliction to revenge my Tears.

But indeed he says it with something of an uncommon Air of Gravity, † that it should be consider'd, whether Men are *religious* or rather *impious* when they have such base Sentiments of the *Divinity*, as to think he stands in need of any Services Men can render him, that he is exalted with their Compliments and Marks of their Respect to him, or that he is uneasy and vexed when they with-hold them. For so it is intimated that all the Calamities of the *Calydonians* of old, with the Death of *Meleager*, were owing to the Resentment of *Diana*, who was disregarded in a sumptuous Sacrifice that was made to other Deities. But *Lucian* must not be expected to be long without laughing. Poor *Diana* ! well might she resent this usage so severely ; methinks I see her sitting melancholy in Heaven by herself and complaining of her hard Fate, [μεμψιμοιρίας] when all the rest of the *Gods* and *Goddeses* were merry a feasting with *Oeneus* ; where it is plain he banters these Verses of *Homer* in the Speech of *Phœnix*, Il. ι. l. 529.

Καὶ γὰρ τοῖσι κακὸν χρυσόθεον Ἄρτεμις ὤρσε
Χωσαμένη ὃ οἱ ἔτι θαλύσια γενῶ ἀλώης
῾Οινεὺς ῥέζ᾽ ἄλλοι δὲ θεοὶ δαίνυνθ' ἐκατόμβας

† Καὶ πολὺ γὰρ αἶμαι πρότιρον τῇ γελᾶν πρὸς ἑαυτὴν τις ἐξέλασται, πότιρον ἑυσεβείας αὐτῆς χρη καλῶν, ἢ ταναλίων θεοῖς ἐχθρῶν, καὶ κατακείμενας ὡς ἔτω ταπεινὸν καὶ ἀγίαν τὸ θεῖον ὑπελήφασιν, ὥς εἶναι ἀνθρώπων ἐνδοξείας, καὶ κατακείμενοι ὑπιδόλαι, καὶ ἀγαπητῶν ἀνθρώπων.

Οἷη δ' ἔκ' ἔρρεξε Διὸς κέρη μεγάλοιο,
 Ἡ λάθετ' ἢ ἔκ' ἐνόησεν, ἀάσατο δ' ἑ μέγα θυμῷ.
Diana 'twas who rais'd the bloody War
T' afflict th' Etolians for the fault of CENEUS.
He for the Plenty of a fruitful Harvest,
Offer'd whole Hecatombs to all the Gods,
Grateful to ev'ry Deity but Diana;
To her, or thro' neglect, or thro' Oblivion,
He rais'd no Altar, no Oblation made.
Incens'd by this Affront——&c.

But when either he, or the grave Philosophers I be-
 fore nam'd, represent it as a *false Notion*, that the
 Deity is at all appeasable by Mens Prayers, I confess
 I think Madam Dacier has given a very good and sa-
 tisfactory Answer to their Objections, such an An-
 swer as shews her Skill and Knowledge did not lie
 in *Words only*, or the *mere Surface* of Things. The
Critic and the *Divine* indeed seem to be admirably
 join'd in the Passage I am going to transcribe, “ Pray-
 “ ers, Sacrifices, Oblations, Libations, were the
 “ means appointed by GOD for disarming of his
 “ Wrath, and obtaining his Favor; not actually of
 “ *themselves*, but as they betoken'd a *Change* of the
 “ *Heart* and of the *Will*, and so this Passage in *Ho-*
 “ *mer* is to be understood. He explain'd himself
 “ sufficiently when he call'd *Prayers* the DAUGHTERS
 “ OF JOVE. *Those Prayers* which are made for Fear
 “ or Interest *without any Change in the Will*, and with-
 “ out Repentance, are not the Daughters of *Heaven*,
 “ but of the *Earth*. Thus it appears, that this
 “ Charge of *Plato's* is very ill-grounded, and this
 “ Expression of *Homer*

“ ————σπειντοί

“ ——— στεπλοὶ ὃ τὸ καὶ θεοὶ αὐτοὶ,

“ *The Gods suffer themselves to be moved, is a Divine Saying; it is the Ground-work of Religion, and the only Resource for Mankind.*

I have not such a *Dislike* to the *Poet*, or *implicit Veneration* and *Deference* for the *Philosopher* as not to *approve* and *applaud* this *Criticism*: And I add it with great *Satisfaction* to the *Solution* I had attempted to the same *Objection*, when I read it in *Hierocles*, from the *Notion* and *Hypothesis* I have briefly touch'd in the 25th Page of this *Appendix*.

I AM not altogether ignorant what *fine things* have been said of *Homer*; which had they been true and just, must have set him far above, and out of the reach of these *Censures*. *Madam Dacier* will help any one to sufficient numbers of them, so that they may oppose the *Opinions* of *Lycurgus*, of *Justinian*, who calls him *the Father of all Virtue*. They may oppose the *Testimony* of *Plutarch*, who assures us that when *those Fables and Fictions* which are *most condemn'd* in that *Poet*, are thoroughly examin'd, they appear to be full of useful *Instructions* and profound *Speculation*. The *Judgment* of *Horace* and of *Maximus Tyrius* may be oppos'd, who both make *Homer* superior to the most *celebrated Philosophers*; the *Prince of Philosophers* the latter calls him, and *Madam Dacier* gives it as her own sense too, that *Homer* may be look'd upon as the *Father of all the Sects*, for that in his *Writings* there may be found the *Seeds* of most of the *Opinions* embrac'd by the *Philosophers* who liv'd long after him.

BUT *Rapin* out-goes them all who says, "that by
 " *Homer's Poems* all the Worthies of Antiquity were
 " form'd. From hence the Law-givers took the first
 " Platform of the Laws they gave to Mankind;
 " the Founders of Monarchies and Commonwealths
 " from hence took the Model of their Politics; hence
 " the Philosophers found the first Principles of Mo-
 " rality, which they have taught the People. From
 " this great Original *Socrates, Plato, Aristotle* came
 " to be Philosophers." Particularly the Things
 which this Poet has said of the *Deities*, and *their In-*
tervention in human Affairs are defended and meet with
 Praise.

DOES he make his *Tripods* walk, entertain us with
speaking Horses, or feign other things that cannot be
 reduc'd to human Probability? His *Advocates* will ex-
 pressly own all those Stories to be so far from being
 probable, that they are *naturally impossible*; "but the
 " Poet, say they, reduces them to probability thro'
 " the infinite Power of the Gods, who work all those
 " wonders. Thus nothing ought to be more ho-
 " nourable to *Homer* than his having been sensible
 " that the most extraordinary and wonderful Events
 " would cease to be incredible when the Gods were
 " brought in as *Actors*, and that the *nicest Spirit of*
 " *Criticism* would submit to such an Intervention."
 A broad Foundation as any Poet in the World could
 wish, to build the most *fanciful and extravagant Ma-*
chinery upon, and to support it against all the *Batte-*
ries of Critics!

BUT still more directly to our present point, our
 Poet is defended as to his Representations of the *Bat-*
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bles, Wounds, Punishments, and Imprisonments of the Gods, and of the deceitful Dream sent by Jupiter to Agamemnon, &c.

IN the first place I say to this, that if *Madam Dacier* could have produced as many great Names of Persons that justify'd *Homer* in these particular Things, as she has alledg'd in speaking to a more general Defence or Encomium, still it would be but a moot Point, Philosophers against Philosophers, and Critics against Critics, as may appear by what I have already said.

IF we were to go by *Authority* in this Matter, many would think perhaps that *PLATO* and *TULLY* only would weigh against a considerable number in the opposite Opinion; but this is not the reasonable way of forming our Judgments, and for my own part, tho' I confess I am very well pleas'd to find my self in such good Company, yet I had no manner of Design in it, having form'd this Judgment upon the reading *Homer*, when I scarce knew any thing of *PLATO*'s Sentiments in the matter, more than that he was for banishing Poets out of his Commonwealth, for fear they should corrupt Mens Principles and Morals; and I conjectur'd it might be the many obnoxious Things he had met with in this our celebrated Poet, that gave occasion for such a severe Censure upon the whole Fraternity, which I thought and do still think was carrying the matter a great deal too far.

THE fore-mention'd *French Critic* acknowledges, that the Passage at the beginning of the second Book about the *deceitful Dream*, has exercis'd the Censure of

of the *antient Critics* who were shock'd that *Homer* should make *Jupiter* guilty of a Deceit, and the Author of a Lye, and in particular *PLATO* objects that this is a Conduct unworthy of *GOD* who is all Truth. The Passage is thus in the Original.

Ἄλλοι μὲν ῥα Θεοὶ τε καὶ ἄνδρες ἱπποκορυσαῖς
 Εὐδὸν πᾶννύχιοι. Δία δ' οὐκ ἔχε νήδυμ' ὕπνῳ.
 Ἄλλ' ὅγε μερμηρίζε κατὰ φρένα, ὡς Ἀχιλλῆα
 Τιμήσῃ, δλέσῃ ᾧ πολέας ἐπὶ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν.
 Ἦσθε ᾧ οἱ κατὰ θυμὸν ἀρίστη φαίνετο βεβλή,
 Πέμψαι ἐπ' Ἀτρεΐδῃ Ἀγαμέμνονι ἔλлон Ονειρῶν.
 Καί μιν φωνήσας, ἔπεια πλερώεντα προσηύδα·
 Βασὺν ἴθι, ἔλε Ονειρε, θοῶς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν,
 Ἐλθὼν εἰς κλισίην Ἀγαμέμνον' Ἀτρεΐδαο,
 Πάντα μάλ' ἄτρεκέως ἀγορεύμεν ὥς ἐπιτέλλω.
 Θωρήξαι ἔκελδε καρηκομόωντας Ἀχαιῶς
 Πανσυνδύη. νῦν γάρ κεν ἔλοι πόλιν ἑυρυάγαν
 Τρώων. εἰ γάρ ἐτ' ἀμφὶς Ολύμπια δώματ' ἔχοντες
 Ἀθάνατοι φράζονται. ἐπέγναμψεν γὰρ ἅπαντας
 Ἥρῃ λισσομένη. Τρώεσσι δ' ἐκ κήδ' ἐφῆπται.

And thus in Mr. Ozell's Translation.

*While all the Powers that tread th' Etherial Plains,
 And the whole Grecian Host enjoy'd Repose;
 Sleep fled the Eye-lids of Saturnian Jove;
 Thoughtful he lay how best to raise the Glory
 Of 'Thetis Son, how soonest to destroy
 The hated Race of Greece, and fire the Navy.
 At length it seem'd to his revolving Mind
 The wisest means to send a lying Dream
 To Agamemnon Atreus' warlike Son:
 He therefore call'd the Dream, and thus began,
 Fly to the Grecian Fleet, Seducer Dream,*

And

*And entering Agamemnon's royal Tent,
Into his Ears insinuate my words.
Bid him command th' embattled Greeks to Arms,
And lead 'em to the very Walls of Troy
In deep array; tell him the fated Hour
At last is come, when by his Victor Arms
Proud Troy shall tumble from her tow'ry height:
That no Divisions now distract the Gods;
That Juno's Prayers have won 'em to her side;
And Ruin hangs o'er ev'ry Trojan's Head.*

Let us see now what is urg'd against the Censure of Plato and others, to which this Passage cannot be deny'd at first sight to lie very open.

THE *Advocates* then for our *Poet* say, that if *Agamemnon* was deceiv'd, it was solely his own fault, in not having rightly understood and explain'd the words of the *Dream*, which order'd him to arm ALL the *Greeks* which he fails to do, omitting *Achilles* to whom he would not then reconcile himself. This, tho' one of the Arguments of a very considerable Critic, is so very weak that it cannot need to be refuted. Pass we therefore to another, and indeed it is fit to be join'd with it.

THE antient words it seems instead of

— Τρωῶν δὲ καὶ ἑφ' ἡπείλαι

were these,

— δίδομεν δὲ οἱ εὖχ' ἀρεάδ.

which being generally understood to signify *we give him Glory and Success*, the antient Critics, say our modern ones, were frighted at the Impiety contain'd in this verse, where they thought *Jupiter* was represented as telling a formal Lye, and so they put other

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words

words in the stead of them. But all this, say they, was built upon a mistake in *accenting* the word *διδόμεν*; for if you place the accent upon the *penultima*, then indeed *Jupiter* tells a *formal Lye*, but place it as it ought to be upon the *antepenultima*, then it signifies, *give him*, not *we give him*. *Jupiter* only commands the *Dream* to promise him this *Glory*, and tell this *Untruth*; and this say they is very different. This it seems is a very old Criticism and Argument, older than *Aristotle*, who says that *Hippias of Thasos* defended and brought off *Homer* clear with the strength of it. And yet the Argument at least, if the Criticism be in any part good, is so miserable, that it deserves a Refutation no better than the former; for who can doubt, wheresoever the *Accent* of the word *διδόμεν* is plac'd, whether *Jupiter* is not manifestly represented as the *Author of the Deceit*?

THERE is indeed another Argument that may be of more difficult Solution, and I presume it is in the stress of that it is said, "that this Passage far from presenting any thing like Blasphemy, on the contrary contains a very pious and useful Instruction." And that it is with a principal view to this it is said more generally, "that *Homer's* fictions ought to be so far from causing him to be look'd upon as prophane and dangerous, that on the contrary they ought rather to gain him Reputation, and to make him valu'd on account of the agreement of his Notions with Scripture-Truths. A Consonancy which is very remarkable, and which may be of great use in expounding the sacred Books." The Holy Scriptures give us then, it's said, an Instance

stance perfectly like this in the story of *Ahab* King of *Israel*, when GOD would destroy him; "for GOD
 " sent to that King a *lying Spirit* to delude him, as *Ju-*
 " piter here sends *Agamemnon* the *Dream* to deceive
 " him.

I WILL not pretend to deny, that there is a resemblance betwixt the Poet's description of this *lying Dream*, and that which the Prophet *Micaiah* gives of the *lying Spirit* in the 18th Chapter of the second Book of *Chronicles*. But I can by no means persuade myself to think, that the GOD OF TRUTH did really give such a Commission, or actually send such *lying Spirit* to deceive Men. This *Prophet* did certainly and truly foretel the Event of the Battel that was the *Subject* of *Ahab's Enquiry*, and therefore we must suppose the Knowledge of *those future Events* to have been communicated to him by a *Divine Inspiration*; but the *pompous Dress* he put the thing which was reveal'd to him, *i. e.* the ill success of the intended Battel into, I would much rather ascribe to his *own Fiction*, because it so plainly bears the Marks of a lively heated *Imagination*, and of *human Weakness*, rather than of *Divine Goodness, Wisdom, and Justice*.

THERE is nothing that I know of in the whole Passage of Scripture here referr'd to that excludes such an Opinion; and from several *other Places* and *Instances*, we may establish this for a *plain Truth in general*, that a Man's Prophecy, and having some one or more particular Things reveal'd to him by *Divine Inspiration*, did not render him infallible in *other Things*, did not secure him in *other Points* from *Error* and *Mistake*.

I FIND that *eminent Prophets* have been suppos'd by very learned and judicious Men to have retain'd something of their *own natural manner*, their Diction, and way of Thinking when under the *extraordinary Influences and Impulses of GOD'S HOLY SPIRIT*. And thus *Grotius* has compar'd *Ezekiel*, setting aside the Gift of Prophecy, *seposito Prophetia dono*, to *Homer* for his sprightly Thoughts, his noble Comparisons, &c. And I think that there is no other Case where we may more reasonably allow our selves to doubt of a *full and total Inspiration*, and to suppose a Prophet acting and speaking in part, (*i. e.* in the *Decoration and unessential Part* as before explain'd) from his *own Thoughts without an adventitious and divine Impulse* than here in the present Case.

THIS Prophet, as I take it, indulg'd himself the Liberty (as perhaps it might be then customary for them to do) to *embellish* and add an *Ornament of Dress*; and my Judgment is that he as well as *Homer* set out, and founded their *Parable* upon *mistaken Notions of the Divine Agency* and Conduct towards Men.

I SEE nothing that can be gather'd as to the Argument in debate one way or other, from *Homer's* being (if that cou'd be prov'd) *contemporary* with *Ahab* and this Prophet we have been speaking of, unless it be that *strong and bold Figures* were much in use in that Age, and in the Countries where they liv'd, and that the *Contemporaries and Compatriots* of both might possibly, for any thing I can say to the contrary, pretty commonly have entertain'd *erroneous Notions* about *Fate*, or a *Divine Agency* too near akin to that Doctrine. For the *Wisdom of GOD* has not seen it need-

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needful to set very good Men, and under Dispensations of the greatest Grace and Light out of the reach of Error in this or other considerable Points in which we see they differ.

UPON the whole, I think it will be very reasonable to join in the Observation and Opinion of a French Author, That we owe to Homer the rich Invention of Personalizing the Divine Attributes, human Passions, &c. an inexhaustible Fountain of beautiful Fictions which animate and enliven every thing in Poetry! But his Religion (says he) is a Patch-work of such Fable, as has nothing proper in it to induce Men either to love or to reverence the Deity. The wise Philosophers could not but blame him, notwithstanding the allowances that are to be made to allegorical Writings; they could not approve his manner of speaking of the Divinity, his attributing vicious Actions to celestial Powers, and teaching Morality by Allegories, in the Letter of which there appear'd to be so much Vice. See a Discourse on Epic Poetry before *Telemachus*.

BUT to touch now upon the Roman Poet, it is not without reason, that a good and pious Gentleman I believe (and whether he be an excellent Poet or not signifies nothing to our purpose) has observ'd, after speaking with scorn of Homer's wretched Tribe of Gods and Goddesses, introduc'd with all the FOLLIES and VICES of corrupt Mankind, that "altho' Virgil is in that, as well as in other things, more judicious and cautious than the Greek Poet, yet even his Theology is contemptible and ridiculous."

Mr. Dryden observes, that Virgil was not so great a Fatalist as Homer, and that he does not scruple to use the word *Fortune*. Without question the Ideas of

of our otherwise very clear and accurate Poet must have been very *confus'd* when he spoke so often of the *Deities Impulses* on Men, of their being subject to the *Force of Fate*, and still without any scruple of *capricious Fortune* too.

Æn. 4. l. 438. — *Sed nullis ille movetur
Fletibus, aut voces ullas tractabilis audit,
FATA obstant, placidasque viri DEUS obstruit aures.*
His harden'd Heart, nor Prayers, nor threat'ning
move;

FATE and the GOD had stop'd his Ears——

FATE I suppose had decreed it, and the GOD (as Mr. Pope somewhere says even of *Jupiter* in reference to the Destruction of Troy) *having the Power of Incidents to bring it to pass, fulfill'd the Decree by providing means for it.* Is *Fortune* possibly such another Minister of these All-powerful FATES? But to make out *Virgil's Consistency* herein is none of my Task, and I believe it will prove a hard one to any that shall undertake it. But indeed it was a common thing for other considerable Authors besides *Virgil* to use the word *Fortuna* and *τύχη* without any certain or real meaning, as the learned and ingenious Mr. Le Clerc has made it appear in his *Reflexions sur le Bonheur & le Malheur*.

It is plain that *Virgil* ascribes Events to the Agency of Deities as directly as *Homer* does, at the same time that he uses the word *Fortuna*, as for instance, *Æn. 5. l. 604.*

Hic primum FORTUNA fidem mutata novavit.

Irim de cælo misit Saturnia Juno

Iliacam

*Iliacæ ad Classẽ, ventosque aspirat eunti,
Multa movens, nec dum antiquum saturata dolorem.*
But FORTUNE soon resum'd her antient Hate;
For while the sacred Sports they celebrate,
And pay the dead his solemn annual Dues;
Those envy'd Rites *Saturnian* JUNO views,
And sends the Goddess of the various Bow
To try new Methods of Revenge below.

Mr. Dryden.

Whether he sings of *Battels*, or whatever else the Affair is, some *Deity* or other intervenes, and by that *Intervention* the subsequent *Actions* and *Dispositions* of the *human Puppets* are over-ru'd. Insomuch that if we suppose with our learned *Bentley*, that our Poet was of the *Epicurean Sect*, we might be tempted to think he introduc'd his *Gods and Goddesses* perpetually into his Story upon such mean and base occasions, and in so gross a manner, with a design to nauseate with it, and on purpose to ridicule the Notions that others had of the *Intervention and Agency of Deities in human Affairs*.

Æn. 7. There is a long account of the *Latians* breaking the Treaty made with the *Trojans*, being stir'd up by *Juno*, and *Alecto* whom *Juno* employ'd on that worthy Errand, after resolving that,

*If Jove and Heaven should her Desires deny,
Hell should the Pow'r of Heav'n and Jove supply.*

Lueticam Alecto Dirarum ab sede sororum

Inferisque ciet tenebris: cui tristia bella,

Iræque, insidiæque & crimina noxia cordi.

Quam Juno his acuit verbis————

————*fæcun-*

— sæcundum concute pectus:

Disjice compositam Pacem; SERE CRIMINA
BELL.

— *she sinks beneath the Ground,
With furious haste, and shoots the Strygian Sound;
To rouse Alecto from th' infernal Seat,
Of her dire Sisters and their dark Retreat.
This Fury fit for her intent she chose,
One who delights in Wars and human Woes.
Her Juno finds, and thus inflames her Spight,
O Virgin Daughter of eternal Night,
Now shake from out thy fruitful Breast the Seeds
Of Envy, Discord, and of cruel Deeds:
Confound the Peace establish'd, and prepare
Their Souls to Hatred and their Hands to War.*

Mr. Dryden.

and thus again Juno is introduc'd in the last Book of the *Aeneid* as sending the Nymph *Juturna* to stir up the *Latians* and *Rutulians* to begin a Battel, which accordingly she effected, tho' it was against the Faith of *Treaties* stipulated in the solemnest manner.

Many more Instances might be produc'd from the *Aeneid* of the Introduction of Deities, and such Representations of their Agency as are not at all for their Honour.

Mr. Dryden endeavours to defend or excuse all this by saying, it is a beautiful Machinery, and Heroic Poetry can never be depriv'd of such a Help and Ornament. Let Poetry have its Ornaments say I too, and let it have a Machinery, provided it is not of such a Nature as tends to debauch Mens Principles, and to lead them into pernicious Errors.

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IF there can be no good Poetry without making all the human Actors mere *Machines and Puppets*, without representing the *Agency of the Deity* as cheap and vile, frail and criminous as that of mortal Man, whereby our just Apprehensions of the *Divine Nature*, and our Notions of *moral Good and Evil* are in great danger of being corrupted: If this be the *Machinery* contended for, and were it indeed necessary to Poetry, which I utterly deny, I would then make no scruple to give my Vote with *Plato* for the Banishment of Poets, since the most delicate Pleasures Poetry could possibly afford us, could not be any manner of *Compensation* for its *debauching* our Notions concerning the *supreme Being*, and for its leading us into *immoral or impious Practices*.

I WILL add but one Instance more, which is also near the *Conclusion* of the *Aeneis*, where he introduces the *Gods and their Agency* in a very exceptionable manner, in describing the *Combat* betwixt *Aeneas* and *Turnus*. Well might the latter's Courage fail, well might he cry out as he did,

— Dii me terrent & Jupiter hostis.

'Tis partial *Jove* and hostile *Heaven* I dread.

Since *Jupiter* who was partial to the *Trojan*, tho' he had hung the Ballance, by which he foresaw the Event of the *Combat*, yet thought convenient (to use *Mr. Dryden's* expression) to give the *Fates* a collateral *Security*, by sending a *Fury*, their dire Commissioner, to forbid Success to the best Efforts of the *Rutulians* Strength and Bravery.

Dicuntur gemina pestes cognomine Dira,

Quas & Tartaream Nox intempesta Megaram

L

Uno

Uno eademque tulit partem, paribusque revinxit
 Serpentum spiritus, ventosafque addidit alas.
 He Jovis ad solium sævique in limine regis
 Adparent, acclunatque metum mortalibus ægris,
 Siquando letum horrificum morbosque Deum rex
 Molitur, meritas aut bello territat urbes.
 Harum unam celerem demisit ab æthere summo
 Juppiter, inque omen Futurnæ occurrere jussit.
 Illa volat, celerique ad terram turbine fertur:
 Non secus ac nervo per nubem impulsa sagitta,
 Armatam sevi Partibus quam felle veneni,
 Partibus sive Cydon telum immedicabile torfit,
 Stridens & celeres incognita transilit umbras:
 Talis se fata Nocte tulit, terrasque petivit.
 Postquam acies videt Iliacas atque agmina Turni;
 Alitis in parvam subito conlecta figuram,
 Quæ quondam in bustis aut culminibus desertis
 Nocte sedens, serum canit importuna per umbras,
 Hanc versa in faciem, Turni se Pestis ob ora
 Fertque refertque sonans, chlypeumque everberat alis.
 & infra

Sic Turno, quâcunque viam virtute petivit,
 Successum Dea dira negat.
 Now other Thoughts the Thunderer's Mind invade,
 To drive Futurnæ from her Brother's Aid:
 Three Furies born in Hell to Night ———
 Their gloomy Mother, at one dismal birth,
 In Heaven nam'd Diræ, by their Mother's Care
 All arm'd with Snakes and Wings of fleeting Air;
 Before Jove's angry Throne stand ready still,
 To fright Mankind, and execute his Will:
 They kindle War, spread Plagues, Diseases, Fate,
 And

And punish Cities who deserve Heav'n's Hate.
Jove from the Sky, sends one by rapid Flight
 T' amaze *Juturna* with her ghastly Sight:
 Wrapt in a Whirlwind down to Earth she flew,
 Swift as an Arrow from a *Parthian* Bow,
 Or poison'd Jav'lins which *Cydonians* fling,
 Unseen, unknown, thro' fleeting Air they ring.
 Thus to the Earth the Child of Darkness flew;
 Soon as she had both Armies in her View,
 Into the lesser Owl the Fury turns,
 Which haunts 'mongst ruin'd Buildings, Tombs,
 and Urns.
 Alone by Night she sits, and Mourning cries:
 The *Fury* thus transform'd round *Turnus* flies
 * Shrieking aloud; her Wings flap on his Shield.

ALL that VIRGIL's great † *Advocate* has to say for this is, that the Description of this *Fury* or *Flying-Pest* is very beautiful, which is not deny'd; though he says more merrily than wisely, upon another like Impeachment of his Poet (where *Segrain* is forc'd to abandon his Defence) that "there was a Fault somewhere, and that *Jupiter* was better able to bear the Blame than either *Virgil* or *Aeneas*."

I AM afraid too many Persons of a better Religion, than *Virgil* have made Representations of the Divine Agency in the most serious Affairs that are liable to much the same Exceptions.

I MEAN not to run the Parallel in all Points; but it is natural to observe, that if Men shall have a

* Lauderdale's Translation.

† Mr. Dryden.

Phantom of an *absolute Necessity* any ways of their best Endeavours being unsuccessful continually presenting itself before them, they will have no Heart or Courage to exert themselves, and do what becomes them; whether we call it a *fighting* against the *World*, the *Flesh* and the *Devil*, or more plainly express it by the performing our bounden Duty, and yielding Obedience to the *Law of GOD*.

I hope I shall not be thought to be *light* and *trifling* in such *serious* Matters, by making these Observations, and producing the foregoing Instances, since the indecent and inconsistent Representations the *antient Poets* did often make of the *Divine Interposition* and *Agency in human Affairs*, and of an *inexorable Fate* and *Necessity of all Events*, have still in my Apprehension a mischievous and ill Effect.

IF it shall be made a Plea here, that a particular Regard and Deference is to be had to the Opinions of those who liv'd so much *nearer the Infancy of the World*; that the Tradition of Truths deliver'd to the *First Parent* cou'd not be so much corrupted as in *more remote and later Ages*; we may answer that Mankind, as appears from *Scripture*, had *very soon* corrupted themselves both in Practice and Principles. And I think it will be a much greater Prejudice *against* this Notion, than the preceding Observation and Plea can be *in Favour* of it, that Men who are suppos'd to go upon these Principles, are also represented, by the *Poets* I am concern'd with, oftentimes as shamefully *profane* and *impious*. For

IF we suppose these to be *real* Representations of the Manners and Sentiments of Men in those Ages,

we must allow that it was not uncommon with them to take Occasions of *Impiety* at some times, as well as at others of *Despair* and *Carelessness* from those Opinions. But if the *Poets* do give us only their *own Fictions*, and not the real Characters and Manners of Men in the Ages represented, then the foregoing *Plea*, in Favour of these Notions in debate, loses indisputably all its Force, and the *Poets* remain liable even to a *double Censure*, first for representing the Manners of Men *other* than they really were, and again for describing them *not only different* from what they really were, but so much to their *Disadvantage and Dishonour*.

THUS, to give a *Spectmen*, where *Homer* describes the single Combat betwixt *Menelaus* and *Paris*, one of the Combatants begins with a *Prayer* to *Jupiter*. Is not the *Heroe* and the *Poet* too very pious? But in a few Minutes time his Sword is broken, by *Jupiter*, as he takes it; and therefore we find the *pious Hero* exclaiming (*to Him* shall I say or *against Him*?) thus,

Ζεῦ πάτερ ἔτις σεῖο θεῶν ὀλωότερος ἄλλῳ.

Nullus te Deorum perniciosior alius.

The raging Warrior to the spacious Skies
Rais'd his upbraiding Voice and angry Eyes.
Then is it vain in *Jove* himself to trust?
And is it thus the *Gods* assist the Just?

IT is Mr. *Pope's* Translation; but I must add a very particular and surprizing sort of a *Note* which is to be found in Mr. *Ozell's* Book, and an *Archbishop* it seems [*Eustathius*] is the Author of it, as follows.

MISFORTUNE

“ MISFORTUNE commonly makes us blasphemers.
 “ But this *Blasphemy* of Menelaus does however imply
 “ a sort of *Piety*; for it shews in him a strong Persua-
 “ sion, that God being just does not fail to declare
 “ himself against the Wicked, and to punish their
 “ Perfidiousness.

I HAVE examin'd and found to be so, or how-
 ever at least a fair Paraphrase, *Eustathius's* Words are
 these, ἱστοιοὶ πρὸς βλασφημίαν οἱ δυστυχῆντες. — ἔκ
 ἀπαιδείωτος δὲ ὁ βασιλεὺς λαλεῖ ἀλλ' εὐσεβῶς, ὡς
 χρεῶν ὃν δυσπραγεῖν τὸν κακόν.

IN the Notes which pass under *Didymus's* Name
 (though they are not all his) upon this Place and
 Occasion there is an Attempt to justify *Menelaus*
 in this Point, and then the following Words in a
 Parenthesis, by some *Christian*, whose Notions of
 the Matter were widely different from *Eustathius's*,
 ὅπως σωφρονέσιν οἱ ἰδνικοί, οἱ ἄθιοι, καὶ ἡ ψευδὴς
 σοφία καὶ εἰδωλολατρῆσα σοφία. Thus do Pagans talk
 and Atheists; and thus says the Wisdom that is falsely so
 call'd the Idolatrous Wisdom.

THIS of *Menelaus* is of the Sort of *Piety*, if
 Men will call it so, that every Man who finds any
 Disposition towards it, I mean that can have such
 Expressions or Conceptions of the *Supreme Being*,
 ought to quit himself, and to be asham'd of. It is a *Pi-*
ety pretty much of a piece with his Brother *Agamem-*
non's, who says upon another Occasion of some ill
 Success, when *Jupiter* had put the *Grecian Army* in-
 to a terrible Disorder, that *Jupiter* who had uncon-
 trol'd Power, and cou'd destroy *Troy*, as he had de-
 stroy'd abundance of other Cities, yet had fail'd of
 his Promise in doing it, and had devis'd a wicked De-
 ceit, Il. i. l. 17.

Ω φίλοι

Ω φίλοι Αργείων ἡγήτορες ἡδὲ μέδοντες,
 Ζεὺς με μέγα Κρονίδης αἶτη ἐνέδῃσι βαρεῖη
 Σχέτλι', ὅς πρὶν ἔμμοι ὑπέσχετο, κατένευσεν,
 Ἰλῖον ἐκπύσαντ' εὐτείχεον ἀπονέειδαι.

Nūn δὲ κακὴν ἀπάτην βελέυσατο, καὶ με χελεύει
 Δυσκλῆα Αργεῖ ἐκείδαι ἐπεὶ πολὺν ὥλῃσα λαόν.
 O Friends! O Chiefs! and Rulers of the *Greeks*!
 The heavy Hand of *Jove* afflicts me sore,
 That *cruel Deity* who with a Nod
 Had promis'd me, that I shou'd conquer *Troy*;
 But now *perfidiously* defeats my *Hopes*,
 And bids me to return inglorious Home,
 Now, when I've lost so many of my Forces
 In fierce Assault; such is the *Will of Jove*,
 Who has o'erthrown so many Fortresses,
 And will so many more o'erthrow hereafter;
 For he is powerful, and his Arm Almighty!
 Abandon then my Friends the bootless Project,
 And hast'ning to your Ships regain your Country;
 For we shall ne'er be Masters of proud *Ilium*.

I HAVE given the whole Speech of *Agamemnon* according to the Translation in Mr. *Ozell's* Edition, and leave the Reader to determine whether the Apology that is made here for our Poet be good or bad, which is this, "That *Agamemnon* only tries
 " to give the *Grecian* Generals good Reasons to con-
 " tradict him; that he proceeds even to Blasphemy
 " to shew that he only speaks thro' Transport; that
 " all he has said proves that he *shall take Troy*, and
 " that *Jove* is infallible.

II. Χ. AT the Beginning the Poet makes a Deity [*Apollo*] put a Trick upon *Achilles*, and carry him
 away

away from the Battle, by presenting to him the abusive and false Image of an Enemy ; and how does he represent his Hero under such a Circumstance he chose by this Fiction (which was so much disapprov'd by Plato) to shew him in ?

Εβλαψάς μ' Εκάεργε, θεῶν ὀλοώτατε πάντων, —

Ἡ σ' ἄντισσά μιν ἔι μοι δύναμις γε παρῆν.

Achilles full of Indignation answer'd ;

O of all Gods most cruel ! you have robb'd me

Of all my Glory fighting with a Phantom.

Were it in my Pow'r my vengeful Arm

Should soon return the Wrong —

THIS is one of the Passages that PLATO it seems had censur'd, and I confess it does not appear to me to be a sufficient Vindication of *Homer* to say, that he gives Achilles a kind of customary Religion which is weak, and cannot withstand his fierce and impetuous Nature, nor restrain Expressions of Impiety, and what is farther pleaded, that all violent and haughty Men have the same impious Sentiments, I am willing to hope is a very false Assertion. If the Poet will make his Gods Men, it is indeed no great Wonder, that he makes his Heroes very free with them. But then this ought to be acknowledg'd a suiting Things to a wild, gross Fiction, and its absurd Consequences, rather than to be commended as “ very suitable to the Heroes Characters, and a making their Manners all of a Piece.”

IN Euripides's Tragedies, particularly that of Oedipus, there is such a mixture of gross and unworthy Things concerning the Deities, together with some good Things, that are decently and piously said of a Divine Wisdom and Superintendence ; there is sometimes such

mention

mention of ill Actions and Tempers of some *Deity*^s and generally throughout such a representation of a *Destiny and Necessity of Mens Actions*, that it is the less to be wonder'd some of the principal Persons are represented also as ridiculing *Prayers* to the *Divinity*.

ETEOCLES laughs at *Polynices* when he *invokes the Gods*; he speaks indeed of *DIVINE PROVIDENCE* in express Terms, but the instance in which he discerns it is but an odd one, and seems introduc'd for the sake of a *Quibble* upon *Polynices's* Name, viz. that his Father had given it him by *DIVINE PROVIDENCE* becoming his contentious Temper;

Ἀληθῶς δ' ὄνομα Πολυνείκην πατήρ,

Εἰδὼ σοὶ θεῖα προνοία.

and he exhorts his Associates to pray to *Prudence*, which he says is the most useful of all the Gods,

Τῇ δ' ἑυλαβείᾳ χρησιμώτατ' Θεῶν,

Προσάξομεθα, τήνδ' εὖ διασῶσαι πόλιν.

Here the *Scholiast* observes indeed, that *ἑυλάβεια* is figuratively personaliz'd in the *Homeric* manner. But if we may so account for *Jocasta's* speaking of an *Evil Deity*, that she figuratively personalizes *Ambition*, and so the *Chorus* in like manner *Discord*, if this *personalizing by way of figure* may possibly be admitted to excuse those from speaking impiously, who are in the rest of their Character represented as pious Persons; yet this cannot be so well pleaded in favour of *Eteocles*, whose Character is different; and therefore I look upon this *σωματοποιία* to be a banter and ridicule upon the Notion he found entertain'd of *Divine Interpositions*, and withal to express his Sentiment, that there was no

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need

need of any Deity, nor applications to Heaven, if Men were prudent and not wanting to themselves; and that every Deity then commonly imagin'd and ador'd, was as much rejected by him, as Fortune very justly was by Juvenal when he says,

Nullum numen habes si sit prudentia; nos te,

Nos facimus, Fortuna, Deam, coeloque locamus.

FORTUNE was never worship'd by the Wise;

But set aloft by Fools usurps the Skies.

And if we examine the Expressions of the wisest and most pious Persons here represented, such as Tiresias and Oedipus, we shall find them speaking of Events arriving *βίαι τῶν Θεῶν*, invitis Dijs, in Despite of the Gods, or if any should chuse to render it, *violento impulsu Deorum*, the Argument will proceed either way. And suitably to these Notions of violent irresistible Impulses of the Deity, or the inevitable Decrees and Force of Fate, that run so much thro' every part of this Tragedy, do two of his Persons make their Exit, when they should leave some good and useful Moral strongly impress'd in Mens Minds from what had been acted.

For Antigone after saying to Oedipus, "What things do you suffer? Justice [or Providence *Δίκη*] does not take notice of the wicked Men (*your Enemies*) to reward them according to their Deservings."

Τί τλᾶς; τί τλᾶς; ἐκ ὅρα Δίκη κακῆς,

Οὐδ' ἀμείβεται βεβηλῶν ἀσυνεσίας.

After this, and more complaining of the horrible things that had come to pass by a full grievous Fate, as she before had call'd it, *πολυπύον μοῖρα* (*πολυπύον μοῖρα καὶ τύχη*) says the old Scholiast, joining Fate and

and Fortune together) she concludes I say with a *ῥῆσις*, that has a considerable Touch of the *impious* and *profane*, saying to her Father, who bids her go to the *Altars* and pray, &c. to this effect, that she had been abundant in Devotions and sacred Ceremonies *χαρὸν ἀχάργον* *ἰς θεῶς διδύσῃα*, having a bootless Regard and Veneration for the Gods, who were deafen'd with the repetition of her Calamities, and their Altars satiated with the Offerings which accompany'd her fruitless Prayers.

AND another Person, whom the Poet is desirous indeed to represent (both here and in other places) as expressing Sentiments of Piety, but yet adheres too close to his *Fatalism* and forcible impulses, to do it otherwise than in an *awkward* manner, the unhappy *Oedipus*, recollecting what he had done and suffer'd says, he was not so mad, as to do and imprecate so much *Mischief* both to himself and Children, as he had done, WITH-
OUT THE IMPULSE OF A DEITY.

Οὐ γὰρ τοσούτον ἀσύνελοι̃ πεφυκ' ἐγώ,
ὥς' εἰς ἐμ' ὄμματ', εἰς τ' ἐμῶν παίδων βίον
ΑΝΕΤ ΘΕΩΝ ΤΟΤ' ἅπασιν ἐμνηχανησάμην.

and he goes off at last with these words,

Ἀλλὰ γὰρ τί τὰν ὅλην θρηνῶ, καὶ μάτην ὀδυρόμεν;
Τὰς γὰρ ἐκ θεῶν ἀνάγκας θνητὸν ὅλην δεῖ φέρειν
which I translate thus, *Why do I lament and bemoan my self in vain on account of these things, since it is Man's part being mortal to bear, whatever the God's necessitate him either to do or suffer.* The Greek expresses indeed only a *Necessity* from the Gods, without mentioning either *doing* or *suffering*, but it is manifest that all the Circumstances and whole Representation does extend it to both, tho' a *Necessity* of *Mens Actions* may be especially and principally intended. THE

THE Sentiment that naturally arises upon such occasions, where these Notions are receiv'd, is a Compassion towards WICKED INNOCENTS, Persons I mean constrain'd by a superior Power, by the DIVINITY, to do things that were unbecoming them, and which they ever abhor'd as well as disapprov'd.

INDEED the only obvious Reflection arising out of such a Representation (for a Moral I can by no means call it) is such as may easily perplex and discompose, but cannot be of any use. Can any thing more naturally occur to a Man, upon seeing a Person describ'd as of very good Dispositions, and yet as forc'd into such Actions as raise the greatest horror, and shock us most to think of, than that which is express'd in the following Lines taken out of the *English* Tragedy of *Oedipus*, which, if I remember right, is most ly form'd upon the above-mention'd *Phœnissæ* of the *Greek Poet* I have last been speaking of.

To you, good Gods, I make my last Appeal,
Or clear my Virtues or my Crimes reveal:
If wandering in the maze of FATE I've run,
And backward trod the Paths I sought to shun,
Impute my Errors to your OWN DECREE;
My Hands are guilty, but my Heart is free.

The Lines are good, and the Sentiment just upon the Supposition that Euripides made; but what I have been arguing is this, that neither he, nor others of the Poets, ought to have made such a Supposition, and such false Representations of a Divine Interposition and Agency.

MUSEVM FINIS
BRITAN
NICVM